

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES : STUDIES IN THE VERSIONS AND THE HISTORY OF EXEGESIS

Robert Basil Salters

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THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES : STUDIES IN THE
VERSIONS AND THE HISTORY OF EXEGESIS

by

Robert Basil Salters

A Thesis
submitted to The Faculty of Divinity,
The University of St. Andrews, in
fulfilment of the requirement for the
degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

St. Andrews, Scotland

1973



Th 7099

STATEMENT and DECLARATION

On 1st October 1968 I was accepted as a Research Student under Ordinance General No. 12 and as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy under the resolution of the University Court 1967, No. 1.

On 1st October 1968 I commenced research on "The Book of Ecclesiastes : Studies in the Versions and the History of Exegesis" which is now being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

I hereby declare that the following thesis is based on the results of research carried out by myself, that it is my own composition and that it has not previously been presented for a Higher Degree.

The research was carried out at the University of St. Andrews.

.....
Robert Basil Salters

CERTIFICATE

I certify that ROBERT BASIL SALTERS has spent nine terms of research at the University of St. Andrews, that he has fulfilled the conditions of the resolution of the University Court 1967 No. 1 and that he is qualified to submit this thesis in application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

.....
 William McKane,
 Professor of Hebrew and
 Oriental Languages,
 University of St. Andrews.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to express my thanks to my supervisor, Professor William McKane, for his attentive interest throughout the course of the studies represented by this thesis. His scholarship and critical acumen have been invaluable to me, both as a stimulus and as a guide. I should also like to thank my wife, Audrey, who has contributed practically to the organisation and checking of the bibliography, and whose support has been a constant encouragement. Others have, of course, contributed to the academic development which lies behind this thesis, and to all of them, as to library and clerical staff, I am grateful. I am appreciative also of a research scholarship awarded by the University of St. Andrews which has made my study possible.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>AJSL</u>	American Journal of Semitic Languages
Aq.	Aquila
<u>ATD</u>	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
AV	Authorised Version
<u>BASOR</u>	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
<u>BDB</u>	F. Brown, S.R. Driver, and C.A. Briggs, <u>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament.</u>
BH ³	Biblia Hebraica (Third Edition, 1937)
B. Tal.	Babylonian Talmud
<u>BZAW</u>	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.
<u>CBQ</u>	The Catholic Biblical Quarterly
<u>CJT</u>	Canadian Journal of Theology
<u>CTM</u>	Concordia Theological Monthly.
<u>GK</u>	E. Kautzsch (ed.) <u>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</u>
<u>HAT</u>	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
<u>HDB</u>	J. Hastings (ed.) <u>A Dictionary of the Bible</u>
<u>IB</u>	The Interpreter's Bible
JB	The Jerusalem Bible
<u>JBL</u>	Journal of Biblical Literature
<u>JE</u>	The Jewish Encyclopaedia.
<u>JJS</u>	Journal of Jewish Studies

<u>JNES</u>	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
<u>JQR</u>	Jewish Quarterly Review
<u>JSS</u>	Journal of Semitic Studies
J.Tal.	Jerusalem Talmud
<u>JTS</u>	Journal of Theological Studies
<u>KAT</u>	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
<u>KB</u>	L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, <u>Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros</u>
<u>KHAT</u>	Kürzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament
Koh.	Koheleth
LXX.	Septuagint
<u>MPG</u>	J.P. Migne (ed.), <u>Patrologia Graeca</u>
<u>MPL</u>	J.P. Migne (ed.), <u>Patrologia Latina</u>
MT	Masoretic Text
NEB	New English Bible
O.T.	Old Testament
P	Peshitta
<u>PAAJR</u>	Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research.
RSV	Revised Standard Version
RV	Revised Version
<u>SJT</u>	Scottish Journal of Theology
sh	Syrohexapla
SK	H.L. Ginsberg, <u>Studies in Koheleth</u>
SSK	H.L. Ginsberg, "Supplementary studies in Koheleth".
Sym.	Symmachus

T	Targum
Theod.	Theodotion
V	Vulgate
<u>VT</u>	Vetus Testamentum
<u>VTS</u>	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
<u>ZAW</u>	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.

I INTRODUCTION

This thesis developed out of an examination of the Septuagint version of the book of Ecclesiastes. In that version it was discovered that the translator was occasionally guilty of incorporating exegesis in his translation¹, and the question arose as to whether the same phenomenon could be detected in the Peshitta and Targum versions also. After making a study of these three versions, it was felt that, rather than make a further study, as such, of the Vulgate version, an examination of the history of the exegesis of selected passages in Ecclesiastes would reveal not only the general character of the Vulgate but also bring together the contribution of each version, and all four versions could be set in the context of the exegetical history of the passage concerned. This latter study revealed the unique position in this history, of the medieval Jewish commentator, Rashbam.

In the past hundred years the book of Ecclesiastes has been described in a variety of ways. H. Heine called it

"Hohelied der Skepsis"², while at the other end of the scale Franz Delitzsch³ considered it to be "Hohelied der Gottesfurcht". M. Jastrow, Jr., earlier this century, gave his commentary on it the title "A Gentle Cynic"⁴, and, more recently, H.W. Pertzberg has described the book as "... die erschütterndste messianische Weissagung, die das Alte Testament aufzuweisen hat".⁵ These descriptions draw attention to the extremes of opinion held as to the book and its contents.

It should not be thought, however, that this variety of opinion is simply the result of the critical scholarship of the 19th and 20th centuries. It might be said that throughout its existence the book of Ecclesiastes has divided opinion. The inclusion of the book in the Jewish canon (c. 100 A.D.) was accompanied by loud protests from certain quarters; some of these protests are reflected in the Mishnah and Talmud. For example:

All the holy writings render the hands unclean.⁶ The Song of Songs and Koheleth⁷ render the hands unclean. Rabbi Judah says: The Song of Songs renders the hands unclean, but there are conflicting opinions about Koheleth. Rabbi Jose says: Koheleth does not render the hands unclean, but there are conflicting opinions about the Song of Songs. Rabbi Simeon says: On Koheleth, Beth Shammai is more lenient and Beth Hillel is more rigid.⁸ Rabbi Simeon b. Azzai said: I received it from the mouth of the seventy-two elders on the day that they appointed Rabbi Eleazar b. Azariah at the Talmudic Academy, that the Song of Songs and Koheleth render the hands unclean.⁹

In the Talmud¹⁰ we read:

Rabbi Meir says: Koheleth does not render the hands unclean, but there are conflicting opinions about the Song of Songs. Rabbi Jose says: The Song of Songs renders the hands unclean, but there are conflicting opinions about Koheleth. Rabbi Simeon says: On Koheleth Beth Shammai is more lenient and Beth Hillel is more rigid, but Ruth, Song of Songs and Esther make the hands unclean ... Rabbi Simeon b. Menesia said: Koheleth does not render the hands unclean because it is only Solomon's wisdom.

Again we find:

Rabbi Judah b. Rabbi Samuel b. Shilath said in the name of Rab: The wise men sought to hide the book of Koheleth because its words contradict one another. Why did they not hide it? Because it begins with words of Torah and ends with words of Torah. It begins with words of Torah by opening with 'What advantage has man in return for all the toil in which he engages, under the sun?' In the school of Rabbi Jannai it is said: Under the sun he has none¹¹, but before the sun he has. The book ends with words of Torah - 'Let us hear the conclusion of the matter, fear God and keep his commandments'.¹²

We further read in the Midrash Rabbah: "The wise men sought to hide the book of Koheleth because they found in it words of heresy".¹³ And Jerome in his commentary on Ecclesiastes mentions that some Jews teach that the book ought to be obliterated, though Jerome himself disagrees with this view.¹⁴

From these quotations it may be concluded that, while there must have been a majority of Rabbis and scholars who held that Koheleth was divinely inspired (due to the fact that it did enter the Jewish canon), there were many who were opposed to its being set on the same level as other scripture. Hence,

opinions such as those of Heine and Delitzsch are no further apart than those recorded in Mishnah, Talmud and Midrash.

What saved Ecclesiastes, as far as the canon is concerned, was a) the universal belief that it had been written by Solomon, b) the fact that pious statements such as 12.15f.; 11.9b; 3.17; etc. were scattered throughout the book, and c) that sceptical statements such as 1.3 could be exegetically handled - and acceptably at that - in such a way as to lose their sceptical flavour, and that neutral statements such as 3.15b could be made the vehicle of Jewish piety. It is this latter attitude to the unorthodox in Koheleth that we have tended to high-light in the thesis. It is our contention that the versions were translated in this exegetical climate, and by translators who, like Jerome, opposed the view that Koheleth should be obliterated. We further maintain that this exegetical approach has - at least in spirit - continued to accompany the book even to the present day.¹⁵

We begin, however, in section II with three separate studies in the versions of Koheleth, (i) the Septuagint, (ii) the Peshitta, (iii) the Targum. An attempt is made to introduce the Septuagint. Attention is drawn to the style of the Greek - a style which is very Semitic in character, and which, upon examination reveals that the translator has, for the most

part, followed the Hebrew word order, in a manner much like that of the Aquila translation of the Old Testament. The question arises as to the raison d'être of such a style, and the answer is sought in the fact that the translator believed a) in the scriptural status of the book he was translating, and b) that the details of the original were so important that he had to represent them in his translation. Since Rabbi Akiba was renowned for his insistence on the importance of the details of the Hebrew text, and since Aquila had been a pupil of his, the conclusion is reached, albeit tentatively - for it is not of the essence of the argument - that Aquila is the probable author of the Septuagint of Ecclesiastes.

The Hebrew text underlying the Greek translation is also discussed; it is found to differ only slightly from MT. There are the usual differences which can be traced to ditto-graphy, confusion of characters, mistaken vocalisation and copyist's errors. But several examples are found where the translator could not suppress his presuppositions. These include adjustments of the original text in the interests of tidiness, but also deliberate alterations which are homiletically motivated. This latter type is further illustrated in section III (i),

The study of the Peshitta of koheleth follows. Here again it is found that the translator is eager to follow the

word order of the text, though this is naturally not so apparent as in the Septuagint, since Syriac is a cognate language of Hebrew. The terms used by the translator to render the word for 'God' in Koheleth are discussed at length, and the conclusion is reached that the variation of terminology is not the work of the Syriac translator, but of a later hand - the hand of someone who was offended or embarrassed that the name of God (יהוה) was absent from the book, and who felt that the sole use of אלהים gave the impression that Koheleth's God was remote. Attention is also drawn to additions in the Peshitta, and these are found to be of an exegetical nature and of the same flavour as the alterations in the Septuagint.

The relation between the Peshitta and the Septuagint is also examined, and several passages are discussed which demonstrate that the relationship is a strong one. On the other hand, it is clearly shown that the Peshitta is not related in such a way as to follow the Septuagint slavishly when the latter deviates from MT. It is further felt that this relationship takes two forms; the translator has occasionally followed the Greek version, and the translation has been adjusted at a later date with a view to bringing it into line with the Septuagint.

The Targum to Koheleth is introduced. It differs from the other two versions in that it is paraphrastic and midrashic

in character, and so not on the same level as a translation. The midrashic elements are illustrated and discussed, while the rare examples when the Targumist gives a tolerably good Aramaic translation of the Hebrew are also brought to light.

The Targumist's handling of the Hebrew text is illustrated. He is concerned to suppress the unorthodox and the sceptical, and even when orthodoxy is not at stake in the Hebrew text, he is eager to use a phrase or a single word to suggest some pious statement.

The Targum's relation to *Kohemoth Rabbah* is suggested. Some of the midrashic material in the Targum is to be found in some form or other in *Kohemoth Rabbah* and *Yalkut Shemoni*, and various examples are discussed. The Targumist, after the manner of the *Kohemoth Rabbah*, felt the need to spell out the view that Solomon was the author of the book; the ways in which he does this are listed and discussed.

Common to the Septuagint and Peshitta are the few occasions where the translators have allowed their exegetical standpoint to influence their rendering. These occasions, in translations where the aim otherwise seems to be to remain close to the Hebrew text, are frequent enough to indicate that the translators were prone to find the orthodox and pious among the unorthodox and sceptical. The Targumist, not attempting a translation as such, reveals the pressures brought

to bear on a translator of Koheleth - pressures to slant the work towards piety and orthodoxy. Such is the exegetical approach of the Targumist that no scepticism is allowed to remain; it is entirely explained away. With such an exegetical approach to the Hebrew text in the background, as it were, a translation such as Septuagint or Peshitta, could be undertaken without the need to incorporate any homiletical material into the work. This is the reason why so little has crept in. But the actual occurrences are windows through which can be seen the vast exegetical material on Koheleth which is explicit in the Targum.

The section on the history of exegesis is divided into two main parts, the first of which deals with selected passages throughout the book. These passages have been chosen for various reasons. The first verse (1.1) is considered because of its being the superscription, the work of an editor, and because of its implication that Solomon wrote the book. The verses 2-11 of the same chapter, usually known as the prologue, are not all difficult, nor are they all exegetically interesting, but they are an example of a complete section in the book, and it was felt that all ten verses should be dealt with for this reason. Again, an examination of a unit such as this throws into relief the exegetical method of the commentators. It

will be seen that, with the exception of Rashbam, the ancient commentators do not see those verses as hanging together, but interpret them simply as isolated passages. The other verses are selected because the history of their exegesis is interesting. Some of them give rise to an interesting history of exegesis because of their scepticism; others seem to have been interpreted in a pious manner, with a meaning altogether foreign to the text and context.

The method in this section has been to begin with the Hebrew text (MT) of the passages, and to establish, as far as possible, in the light of the versions, what the original reading was. An attempt is made to elucidate the passage, and this is followed by a demonstration as to how the passage was treated or interpreted in the versions, in the midrashim and in the commentaries.

In addition to the versions already mentioned - the Septuagint¹⁶, the Peshitta, the Targum and the Vulgate - cognizance is also taken of the Greek translations of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion, where they are available¹⁷ and when they are relevant; the Syrohexapla version is also occasionally referred to. Apart from the Targum, early Jewish exegesis is to be found in the midrashic literature and reference is often made to Yalkut Shemoni and especially to Kohaleth Rabbah.

Judging from the silence, the early Christian Fathers seem to have ignored Ecclesiastes and Jerome is the first Christian commentator whose comments are considered.

The next significant commentator on Koheleth is Rashi¹⁸, the founder of the northern French rabbinical school, from which his grandson, Rashbam, also emerged. Rashi, though in favour of the reaction against allegorical exegesis, still refers to the midrashic literature in such a way as to show that he continued to value its contribution to interpretation. Rashbam, however, tended to take the aforementioned reaction to its logical conclusion. Ibn Ezra became prominent in the Spanish school of exegesis in the 12th century, and his commentary on Koheleth, while sometimes rather fanciful, is often quite enlightening. The exegesis of these three commentators often anticipates that of modern commentaries, and together they represent a breakthrough in biblical exegesis.

The commentary by Martin Luther on Ecclesiastes (1532) is also considered. Luther, however, does not often refer to the Hebrew text and seems to follow the Vulgate rendering very often. In many ways his comments are inferior to those of the medieval Jewish exegetes. In fact the standard of commentary deteriorated after Rashi - Rashbam - Ibn Ezra, for Mendelssohn, in the latter half of the 18th century, is not nearly so lucid as his predecessors.

However, if the midrashim, Jerome, Targum and these aforementioned commentators are anything to go by, the scepticism of Koheleth was scarcely heard after the book had been admitted to the Jewish canon. Most of the exegesis on the 'sceptical' passages in the book tends to side-step the issues, and the unorthodox tends to be suppressed. Rashbam may be considered to be an exception to this rule. It is true he is guilty like the others of finding piety in the book where it does not exist, but these instances are few, and often the cynical statements of Koheleth are allowed to remain without an attempt at slanting them in an orthodox manner.

From C.D. Ginsburg onwards commentaries vary a great deal, but fanciful interpretation has fallen into disrepute and Koheleth's cynicism begins to be heard again. There are notable exceptions, and we have already referred to some¹⁹, but the tendency has been more and more to let Koheleth have his say. Because of the vast material which has been written on Ecclesiastes in the past two centuries it has been found necessary to limit the number of commentaries and articles used.

The reason for the sub-section on Rashbam now becomes apparent, and is further discussed in the introductory remarks on the commentary. Rashbam's work on Koheleth stands out in the history of exegesis in such a way as to merit special attention.

II STUDIES IN THE VERSIONS

1) THE SEPTUAGINT

The full title of the 'Septuagint' is Interpretatio septuaginta virorum or seniorum¹, that is, the interpretation of the seventy men or elders. The title and the various forms of it reflect the story in the Letter of Aristeas² of the version's origin. Whether or not the letter is authentic it is generally agreed that all the books of the Torah were probably rendered in Greek by the same translator or group of translators. But the homogeneity does not extend beyond these five books. As Swete says:

The Septuagint ... is not a single version, but a series of versions produced at various times and by translators whose ideals were not altogether alike. Internal evidence of this fact may be found in the varying standards of excellence which appear in different books or groups of books. The Pentateuch is on the whole a close and serviceable translation; the Psalms and more especially

the Book of Isaiah shew obvious signs of incompetence. The translator of Job was perhaps more familiar with Greek pagan literature than with Semitic poetry ...

The Greek translation of the book of Ecclesiastes is unique. It differs in style from the translations of the other books so radically that it can be said unequivocally that its translator did not translate any of the other Biblical books. Certain characteristics of the rendering have led some scholars to attribute it to Aquila⁴, and whatever its origin it has to be admitted that of all the books of the LXX that of Ecclesiastes comes nearest in style to what we know to be Aquilan.

A translation may be a great literary work in itself, as in the case of Fitzgerald's translation of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, or the Authorised Version of the Bible, but the same could not be said of the LXX of Ecclesiastes. While the LXX translation of the Pentateuch might be considered to have, on the whole, some literary merit, the book now under discussion is in a style otherwise altogether foreign to Greek literature⁵. Describing the version of Aquila, F.C. Burkitt writes: "It is written in Greek more uncouth than has ever before issued from Cambridge University Press ..." ⁶. The same might be said of the LXX of Ecclesiastes.

Perhaps the most striking thing about it is the word order.

Elsewhere the LXX can be somewhat literal and the Greek idiom is often ignored in an attempt to remain faithful to the Hebrew text⁷, but here it can be told at a glance that the style is completely Semitic; it becomes readily apparent that the document is a translation from Hebrew for the author retains the Hebrew word order with remarkable exactness. The "order is so strict that, with hardly an exception, it would be possible to print the Greek text as it stands as an inter-linear translation".⁸ The examples are many; two will suffice.

1.3

MT שמשה תחת עמלו בכל עמלו לאדם יתרון

LXX τίς περισσεΐα τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐν παντὶ μόχθῳ αὐτοῦ ᾧ μοχθεῖ
ὑπὸ τὸν ἥλιον;

12.8

MT הנה הגלים אמר הקהל הכל הנה

LXX ματαιότης ματαιότητων, εἶπεν ὁ ἐκκλησιαστής, τὰ
πάντα ματαιότης.

These examples may be compared with the version of Aquila which shows a similar adherence to the Hebrew word order.
e.g. II Kings 23.25

MT וכמהו לא היה לפניו מלך אשר שב אל יהוה בכל לבבו

Aquila καὶ ὅμοιος αὐτῷ οὐκ ἐγενήθη εἰς πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ
βασιλεὺς ὃς ἐπέστρεψεν πρὸς ἰηὺ ἐν πάσῃ
καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ

The purpose of this strange translation method cannot have been to furnish Greek speaking Jews and/or Christians with a good serviceable translation of the Hebrew. The style of the LXX in the Pentateuch would have been sufficient for this. No, this peculiar style reflects the Jewish attitude to Biblical exegesis around the end of the first century A.D. and the beginning of the second.

The school of Jewish Divines which grew up in Galilee after 70 A.D., headed by the famous Rabbi Akiba, was largely occupied in dragging out rules of faith and practice from scraps and phrases of Scripture. If Hebrew was the holy language, verbal similarities of the most trifling kind must have significance, and may be pressed into theological controversy. We may remember St. Paul's disquisition upon "seed" and "seeds" (Gal. 3.16 foll.). That is merely a specimen of the method, only it was pursued with immense ingenuity and abundant illustration.⁹

Rabbi Akiba (c.50-132 A.D., perhaps the father of Rabbinic Judaism, is often credited with being an innovator in the field of this type of exegesis and to a certain extent he was in that much of the recondite and spiritual meanings attached to words and particles in the Old Testament which are found in Rabbinic literature are due to his efforts. The Talmud records:

Rabbi Judah said in the name of Rab, When Moses ascended on high he found the Holy One, blessed be he, engaged in affixing coronets to the letters. Said Moses, 'Lord of the Universe, who stays Thy hand?' He answered, 'There will arise a man at the end of many generations, Akiba ben Joseph by name, who will expound upon each tittle heaps and heaps of laws'.¹⁰

Akiba, however, was not the first to take this line. The Midrash Rabbah on Gen. 1.1; 4.1; 21.20 each record that he had been a disciple of a certain Nahum of Gam Zu for twenty-two years and on the strength of this he is asked by Rabbi Ishmael the significance of the particle *nx* in these verses.¹¹

This approach gave impetus to the movement among the Rabbinic authorities to give a final pronouncement on the matter of the Canon of Scripture.¹² The latter pronouncement turns attention to the Hebrew text and the need for a clear consensus in this respect. This need went hand in hand with a renewed passion for the exegesis of the text.

The Greek-speaking Jew, however, being unfamiliar with Hebrew, would find himself cut off somewhat from this movement. The LXX was unsuitable and inadequate when it came to the hidden meaning of a Hebrew particle. Apart from the fact that that version had fallen into disrepute within Judaism due to its association with the Christian Church, it had to be admitted that it had been translated from texts now considered to be inferior to those which were being used by the Rabbis of the day.¹³ What was now needed was a Greek translation which would represent the true Hebrew text, and that in particular detail so that the reader might apply to it the hermeneutical rules which were being expounded among those who knew Hebrew.

Fragments of such a translation are to be found in the third column of Origen's Hexapla which is attributed to Aquila¹⁴ while further fragments in a similar style were found in the Genizah of the Old Cairo Synagogue.¹⁵

According to one source Aquila became a student of Rabbis Eliezer and Joshua¹⁶; according to another his teacher was Rabbi Akiba.¹⁷ It may be that these traditions are not mutually exclusive, that Aquila did receive instruction from all three scholars, but in Jerome's time the latter tradition seems to have been the one accepted in Palestine¹⁸ and, as Swete indicates¹⁹, the character of Aquila's translation²⁰ supports the latter source. In any case it is generally reckoned that Aquila was taught by Akiba at some stage.

Now the LXX of Ecclesiastes, as has been indicated above, is similar in style to what is believed to be the translation of Aquila. We have already observed the strict adherence to the Hebrew word order and have compared it with an Aquilan fragment.²¹ But there are other features which would lead in the same direction. Following on from the servile nature of the translation there are a number of occasions when the translator represents the sign of the definite accusative (i.e. $\alpha\kappa$) by the Greek $\acute{\omicron}\nu$ ²² and this is a prominent feature of the translation of Aquila²³ though the latter did not represent every $\alpha\kappa$ by $\acute{\omicron}\nu$.²⁴ Burkitt pointed out that there

was a certain pattern in Aquila's use of σύν, that certain rules were observed²⁵; this has also been noted by McNeile²⁶ and thoroughly examined by Barthélemy²⁷ who proceeds to apply them to the Greek version of Ecclesiastes²⁸ to discover whether or not Aquila was the translator.²⁹ His conclusion is that Aquila's hand is recognisable in the so-called LXX of Ecclesiastes with respect to the translation of אֵל.

Further Aquilan characteristics have been observed in Ecclesiastes.³⁰ The preposition ל with the infinitive of the verb is rendered by τοῦ with the infinitive not only to express purpose - common enough elsewhere in LXX - but even when it is part of a verbal expression.

e.g. 3.2

MT עת ללדת ועת למות

LXX καιρὸς τοῦ τεκεῖν καὶ καιρὸς τοῦ ἀποθανεῖν

5.17

MT טוב אשר יפה לאכול ולשתות

LXX .. ἀγαθὸν ὃ ἐστὶν καλόν, τοῦ φαγεῖν καὶ τοῦ πνεῖν

The tendency³¹ in Aquila to render the Hebrew אֵל by καί γε (to distinguish it from ו) is also to be found in the Greek version of Ecclesiastes.

e.g. 2.14

MT וידעתי גם אני

LXX καὶ ἐγνων καί γε ἐγὼ

Burkitt discovered that when a noun in Hebrew is governed by the preposition ל, Aquila renders it by the Greek article whenever εἰς would be out of place.

Here as elsewhere Aquila's aim was consistency, regardless of the niceties of either language. As long as there was something to correspond to the Hebrew preposition in the Greek, it did not matter whether it was an article or a preposition. But in rendering the Hebrew prepositions which coalesce with their noun, Aquila usually avoids using both article and preposition.³²

Examples of this are observable in Ecclesiastes.

9.4

MT	לכלב	LXX	ὁ κύων
----	------	-----	--------

2.16

MT	לחכם	LXX	τοῦ σοφοῦ
----	------	-----	-----------

2.26

MT	לאדם	LXX	τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ
----	------	-----	------------

The absence in the Greek version of Ecclesiastes of the particles δὲ and γὰρ³³ - elsewhere so common in Greek literature and indeed in the LXX (with the exception of Song of Songs) - is another example of how the Greek idiom is disregarded in favour of the Hebrew. Further, and somewhat more positive examples are:

2.1

MT :	וראה בטוב	LXX :	καὶ ἴδε ἐν ἀγαθῷ
------	-----------	-------	------------------

3.22

MT :	לראות במה	LXX:	τοῦ ἰδεῖν ἐν ᾧ
------	-----------	------	----------------

5.9

MT : ומי אהב בהמון LXX: καὶ τίς ἠγάπησεν ἐν πλήθει

8.9

MT : שלם האדם באדם LXX: ἐξουσιάσατο ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐν
ἀνθρώπῳ

11.9 (also 12.14)

MT יביאן האלהים במשפט LXX: ὄξει σο ὁ θεὸς ἐν κρίσει

where in each case the Hebrew preposition א is represented by the Greek ἐν regardless of the sense of the passage.

These features are closely related to the necessity to adhere rigidly to the Hebrew word order and to represent in Greek the details of the Hebrew text as far as possible. Barthélemy argues cogently and convincingly on the basis of the above features the case for the Aquilan authorship of the LXX of Ecclesiastes. The hesitation among scholars to be unequivocal in this regard has arisen from the fact that there are extant fragments of a translation which had been placed in the third column of Origen's Hexapla³⁴, that is to say it had been attributed to Aquila; hence to hold the view that the LXX of Ecclesiastes is the work of Aquila necessitates explaining how the fragments happened to be placed in the Aquila column. It was suggested by Montfaucon that this third column contained a second translation made by Aquila, referred to by Jerome³⁶ in his commentaries on Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Montfaucon does not allude to the whereabouts of the

first edition, but it is not a big step from his position to that of Graetz who suggests that the Greek LXX version of Ecclesiastes is part of that first edition.³⁷ Dillmann argued that our Greek version is in fact the LXX but that it was corrected after the manner of Aquila³⁸, but no one seems to have supported his view. The main difficulty with the position taken by Graetz is that there is no evidence that Aquila's 'secunda editio' extended to Ecclesiastes or in fact to any books apart from Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Barthélemy, who is confident that Aquila is the author of the LXX of Ecclesiastes, offers the plausible solution that Origen placed in this column "... une autre version. Et tous les usagers des hexaples, habitués à trouver Aquila en troisième colonne, ont pris cette version pour Aquila".³⁹

Whether or not Barthélemy is right about the third column of the Hexapla vis-a-vis Ecclesiastes is not important, but his conclusion on the LXX of Ecclesiastes is convincing, viz. that Aquila, the student of Akiba, made the translation. It is impossible to say whether there exists a 'LXX' version of Ecclesiastes prior to this translation. The book had only just received canonical status (c. 100 A.D.) and not without a lot of opposition⁴⁰ so that in Aquila's time (early 2nd cent.) it would be in the early stages of being generally received and there would then be a desire on the part of the Greek-

speaking Jew to have this book in his own language. It would therefore seem unlikely that an earlier Greek version ever existed.⁴¹

In dealing with the translation of an ancient text the question arises as to the nature of the Hebrew text used by the translator⁴², and one or two points must be made in this connection. It is never easy to know exactly whether slight differences in a translation are due to the translator having read a different text, or whether he made an accidental error, or whether he required a particular sense. Again, a translator may not be equally skilled in the two languages with which he works, and there may be evidence that he was unable to overcome this limitation, while on the other hand he may have been unable to suppress his presuppositions and deliberately altered the sense. Finally, there is the question of the copying of the translation; errors may creep in during this process, either through a lapse in concentration on the part of a copyist or deliberately, due to the preconceptions of either a copyist or of a private or official manuscript owner.

There is evidence that the Hebrew text of Ecclesiastes used by the translator had already suffered in transmission, though not in any radical way.

At 7.8 the translator's text seems to have read כְּכֹהֵן

מראשיתו for /דבר מר the Greek being λόγων ὑπὲρ ..., that is to say an extra *n* has come in through dittography.

Two⁴³ further examples of dittography may be detected. At 7.12 בַּצֵּל הַחַמָּה כִּי is rendered ὅτι ἐν σκιά αὐτῆς indicating that the translator has a text which read בַּצֵּל הַחַמָּה, the ה being written twice by a previous copyist.

At 8.9 the Greek begins καὶ σύμκλιν while in MT καὶ has no parallel. The י from the previous word בעליך (8.8) must have been written twice in transmission. The eager desire of the translator to be true to the Hebrew text at all times is of assistance in establishing these differences.

The next examples have their origin in the mis-reading of the Hebrew. Again, whether through carelessness or on account of a badly written text, or because a copyist had already made the error it is difficult to say. Letters such as י and י, כ and כ, ה and ה are often being confused, even in printed texts, hence it is not unusual to find a few instances of it here.

The Greek rendering of 7.22 is strange; the first part has been rendered twice. This has resulted from the fact that the translator either had a text which read יי for יי, or himself mis-read יי and, having taken it this way, subsequently tried to make sense of it. יי is translated first κληρονομήσεται and then κακώσει⁴⁴, and it may be concluded that the

confusion of γ with η is at the basis of this, not that the translator had such a different text before him.

At 8.6 $\delta\tau\iota\ \gamma\gamma\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$ translates $\text{כִּי יָדַע$ where it is obvious that the word translated was יָדַע 'knowledge' - the γ and η again being confused.

The letters η and γ are confused in 8.4 and 8.16. In the former passage $\kappa\alpha\theta\omega\varsigma$ in the Greek indicates כְּאֲשֶׁר while MT has בְּאֲשֶׁר ; in the latter passage כְּאֲשֶׁר is rendered $\epsilon\nu\ o\iota\varsigma$ indicating בְּאֲשֶׁר .

In addition to consonants being confused, there are a number of occasions when the translator, faced with the same consonantal text as MT, pronounced the words differently and thereby obtained a rather different sense for the passage. In an unpointed text this can easily take place especially when, taken either way, the main sense of the passage remains, or a reasonable sense is offered by either interpretation. And if the translator was Greek-speaking he may often have had to guess at a word and even to make a choice between one way of pronouncing it and another.⁴⁶

At 3.18 the translator was confronted with the same consonantal text as MT; $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \delta\epsilon\iota\chi\alpha\iota$ indicates that he took וְלִרְאוֹת to be the Hiph'il infinitive construct, that is to say $\text{וְלִרְאוֹת} = \text{וְלִהְרָאוֹת}$ while the Masoretes have taken it as Qal infinitive construct. The Hiph'il is what the context requires

and is followed by the Peshit̃ta and Vulgate.

Another example occurs at 5.6 where the rendering
 ὅτι οὐ τὸν θεὸν φοβοῦ shows that the translator vocalised כִּי
 אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים יִרָא while the Masoretes rightly saw this as the
 sign of the definite accusative.

A third instance resulting in a more serious misinterpretation is found at 7.7. The MT is vocalised מִתְּנָה = 'gift' and parallel to הַחֶשֶׁב = 'bribe', whereas the translator took the final ה to be the third person singular suffix (referring back to the wise man) attached to a word מְחַמ from a root מָחַמ meaning 'to be strong'. He took לוֹ to be in the construct state⁴⁷ and הַחֶשֶׁב to be the subject of both verbs.

The slavishly literal style of this translation has already been referred to above. There are times when it seems that the translator was not interested in the sense of the passage and was even prepared to sacrifice it in order to represent all the Hebrew words before him. An illustration of this may be seen at 7.15 where the Greek has ἐν ἡμέραις παναιότητέμου 'in the days of my vanity'. It is improbable, that the translator misunderstood⁴⁸ the Hebrew construction⁴⁹ here בְּיָמֵי הַנְּלִי. What has happened is that our translator, always concerned with word order and representation, ignored the sense of the Hebrew phrase in these interests.

An example of how an error crept in during the process

of copying the translation may be seen at 7.18. The Greek has $\mu\eta\ \mu\acute{\iota}\alpha\nu\eta\varsigma\ \tau\acute{\eta}\nu\ \chi\epsilon\acute{\iota}\rho\acute{\alpha}\ \sigma\omicron\upsilon$ 'do not pollute your hand' where MT is $\gamma\iota\prime\ \alpha\alpha\ \alpha\alpha\ \alpha\alpha$ 'do not withdraw your hand'. The Greek for the latter would be $\mu\eta\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\eta\varsigma$ which is what the translation of Symmachus has, hence it must be concluded that the Greek translator rendered as per Symmachus, and that the corruption of the text has taken place since then, probably in the copying process.⁵⁰

None of the characteristics dealt with above could be said to represent a deliberate attempt on the part of the translator to alter the plain sense of the text; thus far his integrity is intact. He attempts to render an exact Greek equivalent of the Hebrew. Nevertheless there are a few passages where the translator, it would seem, was unable to suppress his presuppositions.

The first in this section is the harmonising type, where the translator tries to smooth out a sentence or a phrase which seems rough to him. He may be of the opinion that the text before him has been tampered with or corrupt in some way and so stands in need of adjustment. It may be that on occasion his own interests are involved and the harmonising can indicate these; on the other hand his 'adjustments' may simply reflect the psychological need for tidiness.

At 2.3 the phrase בְּיָמֵי חַיָּיו occurs, but the LXX renders ὑπὸ τὸν ἥλιον . Since Ecclesiastes uses the phrase 'under the sun' frequently throughout the book the translator felt that the text was corrupt here and 'corrected' it accordingly.

Again at 8.8 the MT reads בְּיָמֵי מָלְחָה and this is rendered in Greek ἐν ἡμέρᾳ πολέμου "in the day of battle". The phrase

בְּיָמֵי מוֹת "in the day of death" occurs earlier in the verse and in the light of it the translator seems to have adjusted the text in the interests of harmony.⁵¹

An example of where the translator's interests are involved is at 1.1 where $\text{βασιλέως Ἰσραὴλ ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ}$ contrasts with $\text{מֶלֶךְ בִּירוּשָׁלַם}$ reflecting the desire to harmonise (with 1.12) and also the need to identify Koheleth with Solomon.

This latter example borders on the next and final section dealing with the more serious alterations of the text. On a number of occasions the rendering demonstrates the concern of the translator to modify the views of Koheleth either because of homiletical considerations or in the interests of orthodoxy. In the section on the history of exegesis⁵² a number of passages are considered among which are examples which are relevant to this discussion.⁵³ Two passages will illustrate the point here.

At 7.21 in the Masoretic Text the subject of יְדִבֵּר must

either 'be' כִּל הִנְיָ - and the verb be taken as an impersonal passive⁵⁴, or 'men' (understood) where the verb is treated as active. The LXX rendering is .. οὕς λαλήσουσιν ἀσεβεῖς '... which wicked men shall speak ...'. MT makes better sense in the context but the translator is motivated by homiletical interests and supplies an appropriate subject.⁵⁵

A full statement is added in LXX at 2.15 - διότι ὁ ἄφρων ἐκ περισσεύματος λαλεῖ 'to this effect the fool speaks abundantly', thereby making V15 the words of a fool rather than a wise man.⁵⁶ This reflects the need to modify the sceptical statements of Koheleth, a need so strikingly demonstrated in Midrash Rabbah and the Targum.

In summing up this survey, it would seem that the relevant evidence, vis à vis the authorship of LXX of Ecclesiastes, has the most reasonable explanation in the theory that Aquila was the man responsible. Whether it is the 'first' or 'second edition' of Aquila is not important for this discussion; indeed the position advanced by Podechard⁵⁷, and followed by Hertzberg⁵⁸, that this document is representative of a new translation-technique, the high-point of which was Aquila's version, is also attractive, but the latter's weakness seems to lie in the fact that it assumes an approach to translation of which no examples have survived apart from Aquila's.⁵⁹ The point is

that the method at work in this translation is that used by Aquila, and that it is closely related to the rise in the Akiba-type exegesis towards the end of the first century A.D. and the beginning of the second, already discussed above. The translator has, on the whole, endeavoured to be faithful to the Hebrew text, almost to the point of absurdity, in order to achieve his aim of representing each detail. On occasion, however, he fails to do this as has been demonstrated, by altering the plain sense of the passage for homiletical or doctrinal reasons, the most radical being at 11.9, where the addition of a negative particle and an adverb reverses the meaning entirely.


These alterations reflect the machinations among the Rabbis as to the acceptability of Koheleth as Scripture. The book is so unorthodox in places that it is bound to have called forth a mass of apologetic material in order to have made the Canon at all, and, on its admission to the Canon (c.130 A.D.), this material would merely have grown in quantity. As far as the Hebrew text is concerned, this kind of exegesis would depend on it, but to render a Hebrew book in Greek automatically rules out some of the interpretative methods used by the Rabbis. The pěshāt method need not be thwarted if the translation was literal, but certain rules for obtaining the mysterious and secondary meanings would have to be abandoned since they would require Hebrew words and consonants in order to make sense.

The answer would be if the translator could carry across into the Greek a word or motif which could be used to obtain a certain interpretation. Since the aim of the translator seems to have been to provide a very literal rendering, the deviations may well represent an attempt at the aforementioned procedure.

11. THE PESHITTA

The name 'Peshittā'¹ (~~ܡܫܝܬܬܐ~~) for the Syriac Version of the Bible was first used by Moshe bar Cephas (d. 913 A.D.). The word means 'the simple'. It is a feminine form in the emphatic state, and is an adjective qualifying the implied noun ~~ܡܬܬܬܐ~~ 'edition' or 'translation'.² The term 'the simple edition' or 'the simple translation' may have been used originally to distinguish the version from the Syro-Hexapla which was furnished with a complicated critical apparatus; the other theory is that it may have referred to the vernacular in which it was written.³

Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428 A.D.) stated that the origin and translator of this version were unknown⁴, and scholars writing on the Peshittā often preface their remarks with a reference to this statement.⁵ However, after a fair amount of study in the Syriac Version in both the 19th and 20th centuries there are not wanting those who are prepared to state unreservedly that its origin is to be sought in Jewish circles - F.C. Burkitt, A. Baumstark, L. Haefeli, P. Kahle,

J. Bloch and A. Bentzen; still others are equally confident in maintaining that the version originated with the Christians - M.L. Margolis, T. Nöldeke, R.H. Pfeiffer and P.A.H. de Boer.⁶ The former find support for their views in the closeness of the Syriac to the Hebrew text as we have it, its betrayal of Talmudic influence, and the Haggadic and Halakic elements in it⁷; those convinced of the Christian origin of the Versions are persuaded because of the slipshod rendering of Levitical laws, the interpretation of passages which lend themselves to Christian colouring, e.g. Isaiah 7.14 where ܡܠܟܐ is translated ⁸ and because of the general use the version makes of LXX. The support claimed by each group is argued away by the other side - the Jewish influence is the result of Jewish Christians having engaged in the translating⁹, while the Christian tendencies are the result of Christian re-editing of the text.¹⁰ Since it is virtually impossible to control the evidence Roberts is right in cautioning against dogmatic positions in this respect.¹¹



As in the case of LXX the books of the Syriac Old Testament vary greatly in style and quality. The Pentateuch is a very literal rendering, true also of Song of Songs; Psalms and the Minor Prophets are free translations; Ezekiel and Proverbs are close to the Targums, Job is servile and sometimes unintelligible while Ruth is paraphrastic.¹²

It may be concluded that a number of translators were involved and this is supported by a statement by Ephraim Syrus who, on Joshua 15.28, speaks of *ܩܠܬܐ ܕܡܬܪܡܢܐ ܕܡܬܪܡܢܐ* "those who translated into Syriac"¹³, while Jacob of Edessa (d. 708) refers to many "translators".¹⁴ Hence it may be somewhat misleading to speak of the Peshitta as a version; it is a number of versions, each book presenting its own peculiar problems.

While the MSS of the Peshitta are no earlier than the 5th or 6th centuries A.D. the quotations in Aphraates¹⁵ and Ephraim Syrus¹⁶ would indicate that the version was in use in the 4th century Syriac-speaking Churches and may have originated as early as the 2nd century A.D.¹⁷ Its great antiquity makes it a highly important tool in the study of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. According to Pfeiffer¹⁸ the most important text of the Peshitta is that of the 6th or 7th century codex in the Ambrosian Library in Milan. This has been edited in photographic facsimile by A.M. Ceriani - Translatio Syra Pescitto, Milan 1879-1883. In 1823 S. Lee published Vetus Testamentum Syriace generally thought to be a reprint of the texts of the Paris and Walton Polyglots.¹⁹ Both the Codex Ambrosianus and Lee's edition have been used in this study.

It is generally agreed that the Peshitta as a whole was translated from the Hebrew text²⁰ and this is borne out with regard to the Peshitta of Koheleth.²¹ As in the case of the LXX the Syriac translation adheres closely to the Hebrew word order in MT.

e.g. 2.4

MT	הבוללתי מעשי בביתי לי בחיים בטעתי לי כרמים
P	
	

This may not be so striking in Syriac as it is in Greek since Syriac and Hebrew are cognate languages; nevertheless there is this same tendency in Peshitta to follow the Hebrew original. That the translation has been made from the Hebrew and not from the Hebraized Greek of LXX is clear from the fact that the translator at 3.18 seems to have mistaken בורם for

בוראם .²²

It is not possible to say unequivocally what Hebrew text the translator had before him - our opinions on this will emerge in the course of this study - but when the process of translation, the motivation of the translator, the copyists involved in the transmission of the text and the interpolators are all

taken into account it is remarkable how close the Syriac is to the MT.

One of the characteristics of the Hebrew text of Koheleth is that God is always referred to as אלהים or האלהים and never as יהוה or יהוה²³, and the LXX (θεός, ὁ θεός) and Vulgate (Deus) are consistent in their support of this phenomenon. However, of the thirty-nine occurrences of

אלהים(ה) in Koheleth the Peshitta Version renders sixteen of them by ܐܠܗܝܬܐ and twenty-three by ܐܠܗܐ. J. Bloch states that ".... every place where the tetragrammaton occurs in the Old Testament the Peshitta translates it by

ܐܠܗܐ..."²⁴ Payne Smith goes further and claims that this form ܐܠܗܐ as opposed to ܐܠܗܝܬܐ "... is used only of THE LORD God, and in the Peshitta Version of the Old Testament represents the tetragrammaton".²⁵

The Thesaurus Syriacus is not so categorical, informing us that in the Old Testament ܐܠܗܝܬܐ occasionally translates אלהים and even יה in addition to יהוה.²⁶ The phenomenon in Koheleth is not cited, and reference is made to only one example in the Old Testament of the Peshitta translating אלהים by

ܐܠܗܐ, viz. Exodus 6.2.²⁷ But apart from the fact that the Samaritan Pentateuch has the tetragrammaton for אלהים here, this Exodus passage is not a straightforward example, being

the "Priestly" version of the introduction of the Divine name.

The instances in the Peshitta of Koheleth are as follows: the first eight occurrences of אלהים are rendered ܐܠܗܐ (1.13; 2.24,26; 3.10,11,13,14 bis), the next nine are translated ܐܠܡܐ (3.15,17,18; 4.17; 5.1 bis, 3,5,6), then two are ܐܠܗܐ (5.17,18), the next nine are ܐܠܡܐ (5.18,19; 6.2 bis; 7.13,18,26,29; 8.2), the following one is ܐܠܗܐ (8.12), the next five are ܐܠܡܐ (8.13,15,17; 9.1,7) and the final five ܐܠܗܐ (11.5,9; 12.7,13,14).

Koheleth's own variation, viz. אלהים and האלהים cannot, however, be the basis for the differences in the Peshitta. For example, of the first eight references to God rendered ܐܠܗܐ, three are אלהים (1.13, 3.10,13) while the others are האלהים; of the last ten, only one is אלהים (8.13), the others are האלהים, but five are rendered ܐܠܡܐ and five ܐܠܗܐ.

It is also clear from an examination of the above passages that the contexts do not determine or suggest the variations. If we compare the verses 2.26 and 7.26 we find that for the identical phrase, viz. טוב לפני האלהים the term ܐܠܗܐ is used in the former and ܐܠܡܐ in the latter. When God is depicted as judge as, for example, in 3.17; 11.9; 12.14, the Syriac has ܐܠܡܐ in 3.17 and ܐܠܗܐ in the other two passages. Again,

where reference is made to the idea of fearing God, viz. in 5.6; 7.18; 8.12; 12.13, the word for "God" is not the same in the Peshitta - **ܐܠܗܐ** is used in the first two references while the others have **ܐܠܗܐ**. Where God is in the role of "the inscrutable Being" the Syriac rendering varies, viz.

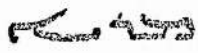


ܐܠܗܐ in 3.11, and **ܐܠܗܐ** in 7.14 and 8.17.

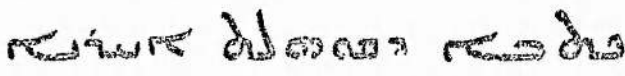
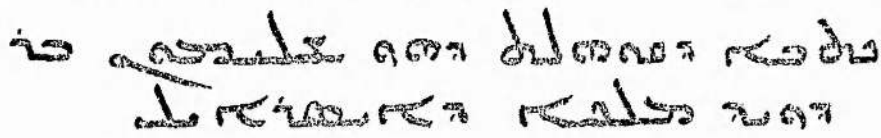
Finally, where God is described as the author of riches and of the ability to enjoy them, we find that the Peshitta has

ܐܠܗܐ in 2.24; 3.13; 5.18, but **ܐܠܗܐ** in 5.18 and 6.2.

The question arises whether the terms **ܐܠܗܐ** and **ܐܠܗܐ** were equivalent to the Syriac translator, who varied the use for the purpose of style. If this were so, however, we would reasonably expect more evidence that the distribution is determined by stylistic considerations. There are four verses in Koheleth where **ܐܠܗܐ** occurs twice, viz. 3.14; 5.1,18; 6.2, but only in 5.18 do we find one rendered **ܐܠܗܐ** and the other **ܐܠܗܐ**.

Since the Peshitta translators of the other Old Testament books appear to render **ܐܠܗܐ** and **ܐܠܗܐ** by **ܐܠܗܐ** and **ܐܠܗܐ** respectively, it is quite possible that the occurrence of **ܐܠܗܐ** in Koheleth is not the work of the Syriac translator but that of a later hand, the hand of someone who was conscious of the complete absence of the

Divine name from the text. The Versions of Koheleth tend at times, in translation, to take the edge off the scepticism in that book²⁸, and it is generally held that this attitude is already present in the Hebrew text itself, in that interpolations of a more orthodox flavour were made there before the book gained the Jewish Canon.²⁹ It may be that the Syriac  is in the same tradition: an attempt to identify, as it were, the God of Koheleth with , to anchor the book more firmly in the Jewish tradition, and so reduce the impression of remoteness conveyed by .

Although the first verse of chapter one of Koheleth is clearly the book's superscription, the Peshitta adds another. Codex Ambrosianus³¹ has  "Another³² book of Koheleth", while Lee's edition³³ has a more elaborate one: .

"The book of Koheleth, that is Solomon, son of David, King of Israel".³⁴ This latter version of it reflects the view implied in MT chapter one verse one that Solomon is the author of what is to follow. L spells out the Solomonic authorship as does the Targum at 1.1 but it is quite possible that the superscription as represented by A suggests the same view. The implication is that Koheleth had written at least one

other book and if the writer of the superscription identified Koheleth with someone other than Solomon he would have been obliged to make this clear. The post-script in A (following 12.14)³⁵ can only be interpreted as referring to Solomon.

מלך ישראל ויהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד
אמן


"The end of the writing of Koheleth, son of David, King of Israel".

We noticed in the section on LXX that the Greek rendering of the sign of the definite accusative was related to the desire to represent the details of the Hebrew original. It has already been pointed out that the P translator was careful to follow the word order in the Hebrew³⁶ and the question arises whether anything akin to the phenomenon in LXX occurs in the Syriac Version. The sign of the definite accusative in Syriac is *ܐ*³⁷ hence to find it where the Hebrew has *nx* is to be expected. What we do find is that occasionally the ancient³⁸ particle *ܐ* appears. It is interesting to note that of the sixteen occurrences of this particle in the Peshitta Old Testament nine are found in Koheleth³⁹, but it is difficult to come to any conclusion about their significance.⁴⁰ It might be thought that the phenomenon was related to the use of *ovv* = *nx* in LXX, but *ܐ* at 2.20, it should be noted,

does not correspond to a *ovv* in LXX.⁴¹ If it is admitted that a second hand has been 'at work' in the P of Koheleth with respect to ~~ⲓⲛⲓⲛ~~, it is also possible that the occurrences of ~~ⲓⲛⲓⲛ~~ are the work of a hand other than the original translator.⁴² It is interesting that at Gen. 1.1 in P *nx* is rendered twice by ~~ⲓⲛⲓⲛ~~, and when it is remembered that Akiba attached exegetical importance to *nx* - one of the test cases being Gen. 1.1⁴³ - the question arises whether the archaic ~~ⲓⲛⲓⲛ~~ might draw attention to a significant *nx* more so than would the normal ~~ⲓ~~. That the occurrences of ~~ⲓⲛⲓⲛ~~ in Koheleth are the work of a second hand with particular interest in the occurrences of *nx* at 3.17 etc. etc. is possible but it would be difficult to prove. No one, however, has made a concrete suggestion as to their significance.⁴⁴

So far the characteristics which have been considered have perhaps tended to point away from the Syriac translator to later hands. The same cannot be said of the next example. At 7.17 the Peshitta has an addition. After the injunction "Do not be over-wicked" and before "and do not be a fool"⁴⁵ P has ~~ⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛ~~ "lest you be hated intensely". There is no questioning the originality of MT here; vv 16f. are parallel in form, viz. two negative injunctions followed by a single reason behind those two injunctions. P interrupts the style of Koheleth here and is at once suspect. Further,

since the words have no manuscript or version support it must be concluded that they have originated with the translator or are the work of a subsequent interpolator.⁴⁶ The words supply a more immediate reason, than an untimely death, for avoiding great wickedness, hence it would appear that their motivation is homiletical.

Another addition appears at 2.16 which, in P, begins with  "Because the fool speaks abundantly". In its present position it does not make good sense since it is immediately followed by "Because the wise man is remembered no longer ...". Attention has already been drawn to an addition in LXX at the end of 2.15⁴⁷, and on comparison it is found that the latter is identical to the Syriac one in v.16. In LXX at 2.15 the extra words at least give good sense and, as has been pointed out, seem to reflect the need to reduce the scepticism in Ecclesiastes.⁴⁸ There is clearly some relationship between LXX and P at this point and in the light of what has been said it is likely that the LXX addition existed prior to the other. The fact that, in P, the words are out of place might suggest that at some stage they did not belong to the Syriac text proper but existed as a marginal note in an early manuscript, and were only later incorporated, albeit incorrectly, into the text. If so they would then be the result of the editing of P, and that in the light of LXX.⁴⁹

This latter example leads into the problem of the overall relationship between the Peshitta and the Septuagint of Koheleth. There are a number of passages which point clearly to some sort of relation between the two Versions.⁵⁰ but it is not always easy to be certain as to what took place or in what order.

At 8.8 it was observed that LXX had 'harmonised' the text by rendering ἐν ἡμέρᾳ πολέμου for במלחמה thereby bringing it into line with ביום המלחמה which appears earlier in the verse. The Peshitta, however, follows LXX

ܠܡܝܢ ܠܡܠܚܡܐ , while MT is supported by T.

At 8.11 מעשה הרשע in MT is rendered by ܠܡܢ ܠܡܢ ܡܢ "of (from) those who do evil" which corresponds with LXX ἀπὸ τῶν ποιούντων τὸ πονηρὸν.

This does not reflect another Hebrew text; the MT reading is superior here and is again supported by the Targum. There is often more than one possibility in an unpointed text and the LXX translator, faced with מעשה הרשע took the מ as ܡ and עשה as the participle plural construct ܥܫܝ "doers". The Peshitta translator, faced with the choice, followed the Greek version.

At 9.1 there is another example:

MT. כי את כל זה נתתי אל לבי ולבנך את כל זה

LXX (8.17) ... ὅτι σύμψαν τοῦτο ἔδωκα εἰς καρδίαν μου, καὶ
καρδίᾳ μου σύμψαν ἴδον τοῦτο

P. כִּי אֶת כָּל זֶה נָתַתִּי אֶל לְבִי וְלִבְנִי אֶת כָּל זֶה
וְלִבְנִי אֶת כָּל זֶה

The problem here was ולבנך which is the infinitive construct with ל and attached by ו to the preceding finite verb נתתי thereby producing the effect of another finite verb, a few examples of which appear in the Old Testament.⁵¹ It may be that the LXX translator was puzzled by this unusual construction and made what sense he could of the text.⁵² Seeing לבי lying next to ולבנך may have given him the idea that the Hebrew letters had been wrongly separated and the text corrupt, and that it should read וְלִבִּי רָאָה אֶת כָּל זֶה "and my heart saw (understood) all this". On the other hand the LXX may be a translation of a Hebrew text which read וְלִבִּי רָאָה אֶת כָּל . MT would then be corrupt at this point, though T ולמבולש "and to examine", and V - ut curiose intellegrem "that I might carefully understand" would seem to support MT. It is not necessary to resolve the problem here; whichever way it is taken LXX and P must be seen to be related at this point.

At 9.2 MT . . cannot be
 right as it stands; לטוב has no parallel. LXX supplies
 what is desiderated here - τῷ ἀγαθῷ καὶ τῷ κακῷ "to the good
 man and to the evil man" and P follows suit *לְטוֹב וְלָרָע*
 Whether the LXX translator actually read לטוב ולרע or
 whether he saw the need to 'correct' the text is difficult to
 say⁵³; however, this is further evidence of a relationship
 between LXX and P.

The passage 2.25 has long been a problem⁵⁴ .

כִּי מִי יֵאָכֵל וּמִי יִחְרֹשׁ חוּץ מִמֶּנִּי

The suffix of 1st pers. sing. is strange here though it is
 supported by V and T, is clearly the text behind Midrash
 Rabbah and Yalkut Shemoni, and is read by Rashi, Ibn Ezra and
 Rashbam. What is required here is the 3rd pers. sing. suffix;
 with this the passage makes sense - 3rd pers. sing. refers back
 to God (v.24). LXX κατ'ἐξ αὐτοῦ preserves what must be
 the original text and is followed in this by P *לְפָנֵי יְהוָה*

יָחֹרֶשׁ in the same verse has been the subject of much
 discussion.⁵⁵ Ellermeier argues convincingly for the meaning
 "to worry about"⁵⁶ but the history of the exegesis is full of
 guesses: T חָשַׁא "troubled", V deliciis affluet "abounds
 with delights", Rashi יָמָהר "hasten". The LXX has

καὶ τίς πίεται

"and who shall drink?" which is a good parallel to "who shall eat?" and gives reasonable sense in the context, viz. "For without him who can eat and who can drink?" P ~~ܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܡܪܝܡ~~ relies again on LXX. The fact that the two verbs "to eat" and "to drink" are side by side in v.24 might lead us to feel that LXX has preserved the original reading here. However, S^h indicates⁵⁷ that 'Aquila' and Symmachus read ~~ܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܡܪܝܡ~~ "have pity" or "refrain from"⁵⁸ which Jerome tentatively suggests in his Commentary (parcet); and Burton argues that this shows that the reading of LXX "is not primitive, for no one would change in that case to the more difficult reading of Aquila and Symmachus".⁵⁹ Hence we are bound to conclude that the same Hebrew text underlies all the Versions; the LXX made an ingenious guess here, and the Syriac translator of P, himself puzzled by the verb, was inclined once more to lean on LXX.

The evidence, therefore, for a relationship between the Septuagint and the Peshitta of Koheleth is strong and convincing.⁶⁰ The Syriac translation is indebted at a number of points to the text of LXX, though whether this debt was incurred in the act of translation or at the hand of an editor or interpolator is not always clear.⁶¹ It has been demonstrated that on occasion the P translator, faced with a difficult Hebrew passage, turned to the LXX for elucidation,

while other examples of the connection may be the result of a later hand at work. That the Syriac translator was not a slave to LXX readings is clear from the fact that he often translates MT as opposed to LXX⁶², as for example at 1.1 where

מלך בִּירוּשָׁלַם is translated "king of Jerusalem" not "king of Israel in Jerusalem", which is the LXX rendering. Or, again, at 11.9 where the LXX translator was clearly unable to suppress his presuppositions, while P translates MT almost word for word.⁶³

To sum up we may say that the Hebrew text which underlies the Peshitta translation was one which was very close to MT; this impression is in agreement with the researches of Kamenetzky⁶⁴, Podechard⁶⁵ and Barton.⁶⁶ Further, we feel that there is an early relationship between LXX and P in that the latter followed the LXX translation in places, and a later relationship which may have been in the form of the editing of the Syriac Version in the light of LXX. But on the whole we are in agreement with Barnes when, speaking generally of the LXX and P, he says, "The influence of the LXX is for the most part sporadic, affecting the translation of a word here and of a word there."⁶⁷

iii.) THE TARGUM

The term 'Targum' (תרגום) means 'translation' or 'interpretation',¹ but although it has this general application² it is most often used as the description of the Aramaic versions of the Old Testament.³

It was during and after the Exile that there took place a decline in the use of Hebrew as a spoken language among the Jews.⁴ This is reflected in the Old Testament itself where, in Neh. 13.23f., there is a statement to the effect that some Jews could not speak 'Jewish', and, again, in the fact that some of the later parts of the Old Testament are written in Aramaic.⁵

In the worship of the synagogue in Palestine this movement towards Aramaic made itself felt in the gradual demand for a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the adopted tongue.

The first translations consisted of the oral explanations given along with the reading of the Sabbath lessons in the synagogue. These were made by a class or guild of interpreters called מְתוּרְגְּמַיִם, appointed for the purpose, but in no sense was their exposition regarded as official or 'authorized'. How far back the custom

extended we cannot be certain. The Mishnah (c.200 A.D.) contains some rules made to regulate the practice.⁶ Thus the reading of the Law was to proceed verse by verse, first in Hebrew by the reader, and then its Aramaic equivalent by the מורגמן. In the reading of the lesson from the Prophets, three verses at a time might be read, to be followed by their Aramaic rendering.⁷

The foregoing does not refer to the reading of written Aramaic translations, and in fact as late as the Jerusalem Talmud there is a law⁸ forbidding the use of such translations in synagogue worship.⁹ However, written translations were not forbidden for private study and instruction and this fact alone would bring about a certain fixing of the 'translations' or 'interpretations' offered in the services in the synagogues. But of the character of these early efforts to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into Aramaic little can be said; the extant Targums are no older than the fifth century A.D. though written Aramaic translations existed much earlier than this.¹⁰

Even less is known of the Targums to the Hagiographa. They vary greatly in style and quality, and thereby indicate that they originated in different periods and from different pens.¹¹ With regard to the Targums to the Megilloth, no mention is made of them earlier than the beginning of the twelfth century¹² though it does not follow that such Targums did not exist earlier than this.¹³

The characteristics of the Targums are summed up briefly by Roberts:¹⁴

True to their character of popular interpretations of the books of the Bible, they often include stories, along with paraphrases and lengthy explanations, by way of illustration of the text. This type of literature was common in Jewish exegesis - they called it Midrash - but in a translation or a version its presence is rather remarkable. The characteristic is not universal, and as the revision of Targumim progressed it became less frequent until finally, as in the Targum Onkelos, it disappeared almost wholly. In another respect, most Targumim are consistent in the way theological motives are presupposed. There is, for example, a universal tendency to avoid all direct reference to the Ineffable Name. All Targumim do not resolve their various theological difficulties in the same way, but they all invariably avoid the direct mention of the name of God.¹⁵ Similarly anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms are usually paraphrased, thus the God who manifests Himself in the providence of history is מִמְרָא דִּיהוָה, 'the Word of Yahweh' God in His relationship to man is expressed by periphrases of the Divine Name, the Word of God, the Messenger of God, and such expressions.

It follows that the Targum¹⁶ is not always on the same level as the Septuagint or Peshitta as a tool in textual criticism.¹⁷ Where T agrees with another version it may be used to support the reading in question, but where T diverges independently from MT there is the distinct possibility that this reflects, not a different Hebrew text underlying the version, but Targumic characteristics.¹⁸ With these points in mind we come to look at the Targum to Koheleth.

The text followed in this study is that printed in Mikraoth Gedoloth¹⁹, though cognizance is also taken of that edited by Sperber²⁰ and of Levy's edition.²¹

The Targum to Koheleth is very paraphrastic and midrashic²² in character and is classified by Sperber²³ as "translation and midrash completely fused together". It is, however, more controlled and less extravagant than the Midrash Rabbah²⁴ with which it has obvious affinities²⁵, since it is in the form of a translation²⁶, and does not formally suggest more than one interpretation at a time.²⁷ Nevertheless it is difficult at times to detect the 'translation' in some of the renderings of the Targum, and at these points it is a case of translation having been displaced by midrash.

e.g. 10.10.

MT אם קוה ונרזל והוא לא פנים קלקל וחילים יגבר ויתרון הכשיר חכמה

RSV "If the iron is blunt, and one does not whet the edge, he must put forth more strength; but wisdom helps one to succeed."

T וכד יחובדון עמא בית ישראל ויתעבדון שמיא תקיפין כפרזלא מלאחחא

מטרא וההוא דרא לא צלו קדם יי בגין כן אתקלקל כל עלמה בכפנא
וכדו חייבין ומתכבשין אוכלוסין ומתגברו על יצריהון וממנן ברזיליהון
למבעי דחמין קדם אלהי שמיא אית בהון דעוא על מותר אכשרות חוכמהון

"And when the people of Israel sin the heavens are made strong as iron to withhold the rain, and since that generation did not pray to (lit. before) the Lord the entire world is ruined by famine; and when the crowds repent and gather together, overcome their worldly inclinations, and appoint their leaders to seek mercy from (lit. before) the God of the heavens; acceptance is theirs because of the exceeding propriety of their wisdom."

It is true the Hebrew is difficult here and this is reflected in the versions; true also, RSV is a guess to some extent. But the Targumic rendering is a long way from the Hebrew text however the latter is to be understood. The connection is so remote that it is reduced to vague correspondence of a few words:

MT	הברזל	Ṭ	כפרזלא
MT	לא פנים	Ṭ	לא צלו קדם
MT	קלקל	Ṭ	אתקלקל
MT	וחילים	Ṭ	אוכלוסין
MT	יגבר	Ṭ	ומתגברו
MT	ויתרון	Ṭ	מותר
MT	הכשיר	Ṭ	אכשרות
MT	חכמה	Ṭ	חוכמתהון

It is obvious that these words in MT have given rise to the terminology of the Targum at this point but the meaning of MT is completely lost.²⁸

At the other end of the scale there are occasions when the Targumist gives a good translation of the Hebrew with only a minimum of expansion.

e.g. 7.6

MT	כי כקול הסירים תחת הסיר כן שחק הכסיל וגם זה הבל
Ṭ	ארום כקל קיבלת כובין דמתוקדין תחות דודא כדין קל חוכא דשמיא ארף דין הגלר

"For as the sound of the crackling of thorns burning
beneath a pot, so is the noise of the fool's laughter;
this too is empty."

12.1

MT וזכר בוראִיךְ בִּימֵי בַחֲוִיתֶיךָ עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִבְאוּ יְמֵי הָרָעָה וְהַגִּיעֹר
שָׁנִים אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵין לִי בָהֶם חֶפֶץ

T וְתֵהִי זְכוֹר יְת בְּרִיִּיךְ לִיקְרוֹתֶיהָ בִּיּוֹמֵי רַבִּיוֹתֶךָ עַד דְּלֹא יִיתּוֹן
לְוִתּוֹךְ יּוֹמֵי בִישׁוֹת וַיִּמָּטוֹן עֲלֶיךָ שָׁנִין וְתִימַר לִית בַּהּוֹן רַעוּא

"And remember your creator, to honour him, in the days
of your youth, before evil days come upon you, and the
years befall you, when you will say, 'I have no pleasure
in them'."

The only interpretative element in the Targum of 7.6 is the
phrase דַּמְתּוֹקְרִין "which burn"; in 12.1 the Targum is
virtually word for word MT, the exception being the phrase
 לִיקְרוֹתֶיהָ "to honour him".

The greater part of the renderings in the Targum falls
in between the example given in 10.10 and those at 7.6 and
12.1, that is to say, it is a blend of translation and midrash.
A good example of this is at 8.14:

MT יש הבל אשר בעשה על הארץ אשר יש צדיקים אשר מגיע אליהם כמעשה
 הרשעים ויש רשעים שמגיע אליהם כמעשה הצדיקים אמרתי שגם
 זה הבל

- T (translation) "There is an empty thing which is decreed to be done upon the face of the earth; for there are the righteous, to whom misfortune comes as though they had acted like the guilty, and there are the guilty, to whom good fortune comes as though they had acted like the righteous. But I saw, by the holy spirit, that the misfortune which comes to the righteous in this world is not because of their guilt, but to collect a small debt from them, in order that their reward may be perfect in the world to come; and the good fortune which befalls the guilty in this world is not because of their innocence, but in order to bring them a reward for what little merit they have gained - that they may enjoy the reward in this world - and so destroy their portion in the world to come. I said, by my word, that this too is empty."

A comparison of MT with T reveals that the latter has, to begin with, produced a tolerably good rendering of the former, but that this is followed by further exegesis of a midrashic nature, which is found also in the Talmud and Yalkut Shemoni²⁹, and alluded to in Midrash Rabbah.³⁰

Consequently since the Targum to Koheleth is composed of such a variety of material it is somewhat limited as a tool in textual criticism. This is especially so in such a verse as 10.10 where the Targum is so midrashic in character; it is of more value when the Targumist is translating. Nevertheless there are a few occasions when T is an important witness and may be used to correct or support MT.

e.g. 7.25

MT

סבוחי אני ולבי לדעת ולתור

T

חזרית אנא לחשנא בלבי ולמידע

"I turned to consider in my heart, and to know .."

The MT reading ולבי is difficult, though it is followed by LXX and P. The Targum's בלבי makes good sense, is simple and is in keeping with the style of the author³¹, cf. 2.1

Furthermore, חזרתי בלבי . and 2.3 אמרתי אני בלבי the Vulgate, lustravi universa animo meo ut scirem ... "I have surveyed everything in my mind that I might know ..." supports T here; and Jerome in his commentary³² discloses that Symmachus had: Pertransivi universa sensu meo, scire .. "I went through everything, in my understanding to know .." again, supporting the reading in T. Hence, since a number of manuscripts³³ also have בלבי it is reasonable to conclude that T has preserved the original reading.

9.4

MT

כי מי אשר יבחר אל כל החיים

T

ארום מן גברא די אתחבר לכל פתגמי אוריתא

The Kethib יבחר is corrupt here and this is reflected in the fact that Qere is יחבר . T אתחבר has preserved the original reading in spite of the fact that the rendering is

rather midrashic in character. The reading is also supported by LXX and P.³⁴

10.14

MT לא ידע האדם מה שיהיה . .

T וְלֹא יִבְדַּע אִנֹּשׁ מִמָּה דַעְתִּיד לְמַהוּי . .

Here MT and T are in agreement מה שיהיה = מה דעתיד למהוי ;
LXX, P, V and Symmachus all indicate מה שהיה which gives a
contrast in tenses in the passage. However, as Barton points
out³⁵ analogy of other passages³⁶ in the book, where the sentiment
occurs, supports MT. It would seem therefore that T is an
important witness to MT here.

The author of T held clearly to the view that Solomon
(= Koheleth) was the author of the book. Not that he tries to
establish this point of view - he takes it for granted - but he
spells it out in various passages throughout the book³⁷ and
implies it in others.³⁸ The interesting thing is that the
author saw that many of the sentiments expressed in the book
were incompatible with the traditional view of the reign of
Solomon; consequently he resorts to depicting Solomon as a
prophet³⁹ who foresees the various calamities of the later
history of Israel. For example at 1.2 הַבַּל הַבְּלִיִּים was uttered
by Solomon when, "by the spirit of prophecy", he saw that after

his death his kingdom would be divided between Rehoboam and Jeroboam and that, eventually, Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed and the people taken into exile. The division of the kingdom is also referred to at 2.18⁴⁰, where the Targum reads: "And I hated all my work which I had accomplished under the sun, in this world, for I shall leave it to Rehoboam, my son, who will succeed me. And Jeroboam, his servant, will come and remove ten tribes from his possession and possess half of the kingdom."

In the history of the interpretation of this book another problem arose with regard to the Solomonic authorship. If Koheleth is Solomon, why do we find at 1.12 אֲנִי קֹהֶלֶת הָיִיתִי מֶלֶךְ עַל

יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּירוּשָׁלַם , "I, Koheleth, was king over Israel in Jerusalem"? Was there a stage in Solomon's later life when he was no longer king, a period when he could have penned the words "I was (or have been) king .."? These observations gave rise to a legend about Solomon which is alluded to at 1.12 in the Targum:-

"When Solomon, the king, was sitting on his royal throne, he became very proud of his riches and transgressed the decree of the Lord, gathering many horses, chariots and horsemen, piling up much silver and gold and marrying among foreign peoples.⁴¹ As a result the Lord's anger was kindled against him, and he sent to him Ashm 'day⁴², king of the demons, who banished him from his royal throne and took away his signet ring in order that he might wander and roam around in the world to reprove it. And he went around the towns of the district and the cities of the land of Israel, weeping and mourning, and

saying, 'I, Koheleth, whose name was previously called Solomon, was king over Israel in Jerusalem'."

The implication of T here is that "there was a time when Solomon, being banished from the throne, was not king over Israel.

Ginzberg⁴³ and Jellinek⁴⁴ record a much fuller version of this legend in which Solomon is eventually restored to the throne after three years (Ashm 'day having taken his place meanwhile). Midrash Rabbah (ad loc.) reflects this legend when, speaking of Koheleth, it records that Rabbi Judan and Rabbi Oniah commented: "He had been king, commoner, and again king; wise, foolish, and again wise; rich, poor, and again rich. What is the proof? (the text) 'In my time of futility I have experienced everything ...' "⁴⁵

From some of the examples discussed above⁴⁶ it will be seen that there is a relationship between the Targum to Koheleth and Koheleth Rabbah, at least at these points.⁴⁷

Further examples of this relationship are now given to reinforce the impression that the Targumist leaned heavily upon Koheleth Rabbah⁴⁸ in the composition of his work.

At 2.5 the Targum reads:

"I made for myself watered gardens and pleasure gardens where I sowed various herbs, some for food, some for drink and some for cures, and all kinds of aromatics. I planted there shade-trees and various aromatic trees which the spectres, and demons brought me from India, and various fruit-bearing trees. Its border was from the wall of the city of Jerusalem to the arch of the water of Siloah."

The Midrash Rabbah⁴⁹ is less elaborate than the Targum here⁵⁰; its only parallel to the reference to herbs in T is אַרְבֵּי

פְּלִפְלִי "even pepper", and it spells out the name

Solomon where T (although it is clear who the speaker is from 1.12 onwards) does not. The interesting parallel - though it is not an exact one - is the reference to India. The Midrash records: "Solomon used the spirits (רוּחוֹת), sending them to India, and they brought water to him from there, and they watered (the pepper) here and it produced fruit". It is possible that the Targumist has elaborated somewhat on the midrash as he was composing his rendering, but there is clearly a connection between T and Kohaleth Rabbah at this point.

At 3.11 the Targum reads:

"Solomon, the king, said, by the spirit of prophecy: the Lord made everything good in its time. It was fitting that there should be strife in the days of Jeroboam, son of Nebat. It was to have been in the days of Sheba, son of Bichri, but it was delayed, and it happened in the days of Jeroboam, son of Nebat; for if it had occurred in the days of Sheba, son of Bichri, the Temple would not have been built, on account of the golden calves which wicked Jeroboam made, and placed one in Bethel and one in Dan and set watches on the road, who stopped pilgrims. Because of this, it was delayed until the Temple was built so as not to hinder Israel from building it. Further, he concealed from them the great Name, which was written and explained upon the foundation stone, because he knew the evil inclination of their heart; for if it had been delivered into the possession of men they would have used it to discover what was to happen in the future, right to the end of time. He also concealed from them the day of death so that it should not be known to man from the beginning what will be at the end."

The Midrash Rabbah here is very full in its treatment. Among its interpretations we have these words: "The strife between Rehoboam and Jeroboam should have taken place between David⁵¹ and Sheba, son of Bichri; but the Holy One, blessed be He, said: 'The Temple has not yet been built so I cannot initiate a strife in the kingdom of the house of David. But let the Temple be built, and after that, let whatever must be take place'." There is a clear connection between T and the Midrash here, the latter again being less elaborate in its treatment of this example.⁵² The connection, however, does not end there. Midrash Rabbah records that Rabbi Ahwah b. Rabbi Zera said: " $\text{הַשֵּׁם הַקָּדוֹשׁ}$ ⁵³ should be read $\text{הַשֵּׁם הַקָּדוֹשׁ}$ ⁵⁴, the sense being, the Ineffable Name was concealed from them." There follows, in the Midrash, several stories which indicate the immense power exerted by invoking the Divine Name, and of the unworthiness⁵⁵ of the vast majority of men to have it transmitted to them. The purpose of all this concealment? "So that man cannot find out the work which God has done from the beginning to the end."⁵⁶

On four occasions in the book of Koheleth (2.24; 3.12f.; 5.17; 8.15) the author makes a statement to the effect that the best thing a man can do is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in return for his labour. T and Koheleth Rabbah show similarities in their treatment of these passages.

2.24

MT אין מיר באדם שיאכל ושתה והראה את נפשו טוב כעמלו גם זה
ראיתי אני כי מיר האלהים היא

T "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink and give himself enjoyment before men, in order to perform the commandments of the Lord, to walk in the path which seems straight to him (God), so that it may be well for him from his labour. This too I saw, that when a man prospers in this world it is from the hand of the Lord, who decrees it for him."

3.12f

MT ידעתי כי אין טוב בם כי אם לשמור ולעשות טוב בחייו וגם כל
האדם שיאכל ושתה וראה טוב בכל עמלו מתת אלהים היא

T "Solomon, the king, said, by the spirit of prophecy: I know that there is nothing better for men than rejoicing in the Law and doing good while they live. Also, every man who eats and drinks and experiences enjoyment in his time, and bequeaths all his labour to his children when he dies, this is a gift given to him by (lit. from before) the Lord."

5.17

MT הנה אשר ראיתי אני טוב אשר יפה לאכול ולשתות ולראות טובה
בכל עמלו ויעמל תחת השמש מספר ימי חיו אשר נתן לו האלהים
כי הוא חלקו

T "And behold that which I have seen good for men, and that which is pleasant for them to do in this world is to eat and drink in return for their labours, so that they may not indulge in oppression and robbery, but keep the decrees of the Law and have compassion on the poor, and so enjoy their work in which they have engaged in this world, under the sun, during his short life which the Lord gives him by means of his guardian angel. That is his portion and his alone."

8.15

וְשִׁבַּחְתִּי אֱבִי אֶת הַשְׂמֵחָה אֲשֶׁר אֵין מִדָּן לְאָדָם תַּחַת הַשָּׁמֶשׁ כִּי אִם לֹאכֹל
וְלִשְׂתוֹת וְלִשְׂמֹרָה וְהוּא יִלְוֶנּוּ בַעֲמָלֹו יָמֵי חַיָּיו אֲשֶׁר בָּתָן לֹו
הָאֱלֹהִים תַּחַת הַשָּׁמֶשׁ

T "And I praised the joy of the Law because there is nothing better for a man in this world, under the sun, but to eat and drink and to rejoice in return for his work, and in his lot which is given to him by God, and not to indulge in robbery and violence; and this will bring him to the peace of that world and he shall receive a perfect reward for his labours in which he engaged in integrity all the days of his life, which the Lord gave him in this world, under the sun."

It is clear from the context of each passage that Koheleth is advocating the value of physical enjoyment as something which he has salvaged from the futility of life generally. What is also clear is that from the treatment of the passages by the Targumist, the latter has been embarrassed by the sentiments expressed here, and has interpreted in a rather fanciful fashion. Koheleth Rabbah makes the same comment on each of the passages; viz. "All the references to eating and drinking in this book (lit. roll) signify Torah and good deeds"⁵⁷ which demonstrates that here too the interpreters were unable to cope with the plain sense of the passages in question. The gist of the comment in the Midrash is the basis for the comments in the Targum and we further perceive that the motivations of both T and the Midrash are similarly based. Behind the interpretations of both documents lies the great interest in orthodox sentiments

and edifying teaching; whatever passage is to be interpreted the result tends to take the form of edification or orthodox teaching.

Having demonstrated the definite relationship between T and Koheleth Rabbah we move on to look more closely at the tendency in T towards orthodoxy and edification. Few would deny that the book of Koheleth contains a certain amount of scepticism: "utterly futile" is the sentiment which is placed at the beginning and ending of the book proper. Few, however, would claim that that sceptical outlook on life remained in the Targum to that book. We have already observed how the Targumist handled ⁵⁸הַבֵּל הַבְּלִי; at 1.3 Koheleth asks the question, "What advantage has a man in return for his toil ... ?" - a question which expects the answer "None". In the Targum it is utterly transformed thus:- "What advantage has a man, after he dies, from all the toil in which he engaged under the sun, in this world, except he studied the Law in order to receive a perfect reward in the world to come, before the Lord of the world?" The despairing negative comment on life is used as an instrument of Jewish teaching about the necessity of studying the Law in this life in order to fare well in the life to come.⁵⁹

The Targumist found the statement at 2.10 somewhat offensive:- "Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them; I did not keep my heart from any pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil." T reads:-

"And all that the Rabbis of the Sanhedrin desired from me concerning the pure and the impure, the innocent and the guilty, I did not withhold any explanation of these things from them; nor did I keep my heart from all the pleasure of the Law because I had the opportunity of rejoicing in the wisdom given to me (more so than any man) by (lit. from before) the Lord; and I rejoiced in it more than all my labour. And this was the good portion that was assigned to me, that I might receive for it a perfect reward in the world to come, more than for all my labour."

In MT the speaker is declaring that he allowed his senses to take control, that he indulged his desires to the uttermost; it is a very different story in the hands of the Targumist, who, conscious of the fact that Solomon is the speaker, depicts him as instructing the Sanhedrin⁶⁰, and indulging himself in the pleasure of the Law. Again there is the reference to the world to come.

In summing up this study in the Targum the great variety of material and method must be underlined. On occasion T can be extremely midrashic, to the extent that it cannot offer much help in the realm of textual criticism; on the other hand, it may offer a good translation of the Hebrew text, make helpful interpretations of cryptic phrases⁶¹, and is, at times, an

important textual witness. For the most part, however, it must be said that the Targumist is unconcerned with representing the plain sense of the Hebrew text before him, especially when he is faced with sentiments which are offensive to him, and no stone is left unturned, on such occasions, to bring about a rendering which is in accord with orthodox Jewish teaching. A very definite relationship with Koheleth Rabbah has been shown to exist, both in the spirit of the two documents and in the material used, though in T the mass of interpretations has been sifted in order to present, albeit in form only, a verse by verse 'translation'.

III STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF
EXEGESIS

i) THE HISTORY OF THE EXEGESIS
OF SELECTED PASSAGES

CHAPTER I. VERSE I.

MT:

דברי קהלת בן דוד מלך בירושלם

LXX: PHMATA Ἐκκλησιαστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυεὶδ βασιλέως Ἰσραὴλ ἐν
Ἱερουσαλὴμ

P:

קהלת דוד בן דאָויד, מלך ישראל
בירושלם

V: Verba Ecclesiastes filii David regis Hierusalem

T: פתגמי בבואה דאתבבא קהלת הוא שלמה בר דוד מלכא דהוה בירושלם

The first verse of chapter one is the superscription of the book, and is probably the work of an editor.¹ The books of Amos and Jeremiah begin in a similar fashion², viz. דברי עמוס , דברי ירמיהו ; and the initial verses of other biblical books, which give a date for the book and/or identify the author³, verses which fall into the same general pattern, are generally held to be the result of editorial activity.

The word קהלת has always been problematic to translators and to commentators and is still an enigma in the twentieth century. It occurs seven times⁴ in the book but nowhere else in the Old Testament; nor does it appear in extra-biblical literature, except that which refers directly to this book.⁵ In form it is a Qal part. f.s. from the root קהל which does not occur in that conjugation elsewhere. In the Niphal it means 'to be summoned as an assembly'⁶, and in the Hiphil 'to summon an assembly'⁷, and both BDB⁸ and KB⁹ take the root to be denominative of קהל 'assembly', KB taking קהלת to mean 'speaker (in assembly)' - connecting it with קהל , while BDB is undecided between 'collector (of sentences)' and 'preacher'.

The versions do not shed much light on the word. T makes no attempt at translating or explaining the term, while P and 'Aquila' (κωλέθ) merely transliterate. The LXX rendering ἐκκλησιαστής , which may mean 'member of an assembly',¹⁰,

indicates that the translator has taken מלך as denominative of לך in the same way as ἐκκλησιαστής is denominative of ἐκκλησία 'assembly'. V, in turn, simply transliterates LXX, viz. 'Ecclesiastes'¹¹, from which the AV gets its title. Jerome, however, notes, in his commentary¹², that he feels the meaning of the Greek word to be 'concionator', i.e. 'popular orator' or 'preacher', the latter being the alternative title in AV.

Kohleth Rabbah preserves a tradition which may be behind the LXX rendering, viz. "Why was Kohleth's name so called? Because his words were said in assembly (בַּמִּקְוֵה)"¹³, while Rashi, although he refers to this view as a possibility¹⁴, explains the name "... because he gathered (הִקְהִיל) many wisdom sayings", and in this he is followed by Rashbam¹⁵. Ibn Ezra suggests that the reason for the name was "because of the wisdom which was gathered (נִקְהִלָה) in him".¹⁶ Sforzo¹⁷ and Mendelssohn¹⁸ follow the explanation given by Rashi, while Luther, following Jerome's 'concionator', takes the phrase מִלֵּךְ דְּבַרֵּי קְהִלָּה to be equivalent to 'concio', 'the sermon'.¹⁹

One of the puzzling things about the word is that it has a feminine ending, and yet is construed as a masculine noun. This is the case in six of the seven occurrences, and in the seventh, viz. 7.27, where it seems to be treated as feminine (MT אָמְרָה קְהִלָּה), the correct reading should probably be

אמר הקהל²⁰. Added to this is the decided impression that the author is a man and not a woman (cf. 7.26f.). Various reasons have been given for this phenomenon.²¹ Rashi and Ibn Ezra, though they differ on the interpretation of the word, explain the feminine ending as due to wisdom, חכמה, being spoken of, while Sforino holds that the feminine refers to Solomon's

בפש²²; but these suggestions leave unexplained the fact that the word is construed as a masculine noun.

W. Wright notes that the fem. ending 'ة' in Arabic serves occasionally to intensify the idea expressed by the word itself, and he cites קהלת as a parallel example in Hebrew.²³ 'Great orator', in the RV margin, is a reflection of this idea.

According to Gesenius²⁴, the fem. may indicate a title or office, and is then construed as a masc. The examples given, in addition to קהלת, are ספרת (Ezra 2.55; Neh. 7.57) and פכרת הצביים (Ezra 2.57; Neh. 7.59). This suggestion would mean that קהלת meant some kind of assembly official, probably an official speaker.

The examples in Ezra and Nehemiah are interesting. In Ezra 2.55 we have בני הספרת 'the sons of the scribe' while in the parallel passage in Neh. 7.57 the phrase is בני ספרת. In Ezra 2.57 and Neh. 7.59 we get בני פכרת הצביים 'the sons of the binder²⁵ of the gazelles'. It is clear from the contexts that these terms are proper names, and yet the

definite article appears in three of the four cases. This is evidence that although ספרת and פכרת הצוריים were designations of office, they developed into proper names, and had begun to lose the definite article in this Ezra-Nehemiah period. The same thing took place in English where the man who worked in a forge was called 'the smith' but eventually the definite article dropped out and he became Smith. His sons would have been described as the sons of the smith, which would have developed into 'the sons of Smith'.²⁶ Now in the seven occurrences of קהלת in one book, two have the article - 7.27 (read as above) and 12.8 - and five have not. The fact that the article occurs with it (and that it is construed as masc.) indicates that it designated an office; the fact that it occurs without the article suggests that the descriptive element had become secondary and that קהלת had become a proper name. Hence, although Gesenius would seem to be right in his explanation of the fem. ending, it is better not to translate the word, but rather to transliterate with P, T and Aquila, viz. Koheleth.

Koheleth is 'son of David, king in Jerusalem'. The phrase מלך בירושלם occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament, though the term 'to reign מלך in Jerusalem' occurs frequently.²⁷ What might have been expected was something

similar to the superscription in Proverbs²⁸, viz. 'The Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel'. It is the awkwardness of the phrase 'king in Jerusalem' which has given rise to the renderings in the versions. בִּירוּשָׁלַם is attested by LXX and T, while 'king of Israel' appears only in LXX. It is true that the latter sounds more natural - in fact a similar construction appears in 2K. 14.23, viz. מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשֶׁמֶרֶן 'king of Israel in Samaria', but the translator of LXX, believing in the Solomonic authorship of the book, reacted to the awkward Hebrew text by 'filling out' the title here.²⁹ P and V produced the equivalent of מֶלֶךְ יִרוּשָׁלַם, which may be grammatically smoother than MT, but which creates another problem in that it too does not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament. T is interesting - מֶלֶךְ דָּהוּוּ בִּירוּשָׁלַם '... the king, who was in Jerusalem'; this may be a parallel to הֵייתִי מֶלֶךְ of 1.12, taken by the Targumist to refer to a period in Solomon's life when he was not king.³⁰ It should, however, be said that there is no evidence of a Hebrew text other than MT having been read by any of the versions.

CHAPTER 1 VERSE 2

MT:

הבלי הבליים אמר קהלת הבלי הבליים הכל הבלי

LXX: ματαιότης ματαιότητων, εἶπεν ὁ ἐκκλησιαστής, ματαιότης
ματαιότητων, τὰ πάντα ματαιότης

P:

כל מה שיש בזה כל מה שיש בזה
כל מה שיש בזה כל מה שיש בזה

V: vanitas vanitatum dixit Ecclesiastes vanitas vanitatum
omnia vanitas

T:

כד חזא שלמה מלכא דישראל ברוח צבואה ית מלכות וחבעם בריה
דעתיד לאתפלגא עם ירבעם בר נבם וית ירושלם ובית מוקדשא
דאגון עתידין למחרב וית עמא בני ישראל די אגון עתידין
למגלי אמר במימריה הבלי הבליא עלמא הדין הבלי הבליא כל
מה דטרחית אבא ודוד אבא כולא הבלי

The book properly begins with this verse. It is a statement of the author's verdict on life and the main theme of the book; at the end of the book proper the statement recurs.³¹ Since Koheleth speaks of himself and of his experiences in the 1st pers. (cf. 1.12ff.), it is likely that אִמְרֵי

קֹהֵלֶת is an insertion of an editor (cf. 7.27). Rashbam held that this verse (1.2) was also entirely editorial³² but it is unnecessary to assign more than 'said Koheleth' to another hand.³³

The main term in this verse is הִבֵּל, which is rendered by LXX, P, T and V by the appropriate equivalents. Johnstone accuses the LXX translator of going beyond the import of the Hebrew by using a word which has moral and religious overtones, and thereby slanting the work in accordance with his own philosophy.³⁴ This is not so. The LXX translator was faced with a Hebrew word which has a primary sense and a derived sense, the one physical, the other abstract. He had two Greek words which might be appropriate, viz. ἄτμις 'steam, vapour', and ματαιότης 'purposelessness'. The former has no figurative reference, the latter has no physical reference. The translator had to choose. He chose ματαιότης because of the context, because he was certain that the Hebrew author had the figurative sense of הִבֵּל in mind. If ἄτμις had had a figurative sense Johnstone would have a point, but it

has not; παραλόγη is the proper Greek rendering here.

According to 5^h margin Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion all rendered ~~אבאל~~ which probably means that they had ἀβδος³⁵, but as has already been pointed out, this is an inadequate representation, missing completely the philosophy of Koheleth. Midrash Rabbah interprets the word both concretely and figuratively while Jerome (commentary), Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, Sforino, Mendelssohn and all modern scholars understand הבל in a figurative sense.

The construction הבל הבלים is similar to שיר השירים (Song of Songs 1.1) and קדש הקדשים (Exod. 26.33), and expresses the superlative of the word in the construct.³⁶ Koheleth greatly emphasises this superlative by repetition³⁷ of the same phrase, and by adding הכל הבל. The pointing הבל as construct of הבל is peculiar, since we would normally expect הבל, as in הבל (Exod. 7.28; 2 Sam. 4.7), but Delitzsch notes³⁸ that this is due to the influence of the Aramaic ground-form עבד, and C.H.H. Wright and Barton agree with him.³⁹ But Jerome may have read הבל; in his commentary he records: "In Hebraeo pro vanitate vanitatum ABAL ABALIM scriptum est"⁴⁰, although both Rashi and Ibn Ezra note the peculiarity in their texts.

The context, then, leads us to take הבל in a figurative sense. But what is that sense? We have seen that the

majority of the versions take the meaning to be 'emptiness, purposelessness'. Staples argues that the meaning should be 'incomprehensible'⁴¹, but the book as a whole does not support this view. It may be that Koheleth found life incomprehensible, but what he is concerned with in this book is to show, from his experiences, that the accepted patterns for living do not produce satisfaction; they are, therefore, empty and futile. The superlative can, therefore, be rendered 'utter futility'.⁴²

But Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion are not alone in failing to represent adequately the meaning intended by Koheleth. The Targumist, although he chose the right Aramaic equivalent of הַבָּל, avoids the meaning of the passage by placing the utterance in a historical setting, and so limiting the application of the sentiment. For him it is the utterance of Solomon, who foresees the division of the kingdom, the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple and the Exile, and who says of all these calamities: "Utterly futile is this world, utterly futile is all that David, my father and I have worked for - everything is futile". Koheleth Rabbah too, fails to tackle the passage faithfully. Referring to a passage in Ps. 144.4 'man is like הַבָּל ..' it is claimed that in Koh. 1.2 Solomon provides the answer to the question, What kind of הַבָּל is referred to in the Psalm passage? "... It may be likened to a man who sets seven pots one on top of the other,

and the steam (הַבֵּל) from the top one has no substance in it". This is interpreting הַבֵּל in a physical sense. But the Midrash does treat the word in the sense of emptiness: "... The seven הַבֵּלִים of which Koheleth speaks correspond to (כְּבוֹד) the seven worlds which man experiences"⁴³ but these worlds are experienced only by the common people (עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ), the sons of the Torah may overcome them.⁴³ The number seven is arrived at by counting the number of times הַבֵּל appears in the verse (הַבֵּלִים counting for two each time), but it is unlikely that this treatment implies a misunderstanding of the construction.

By הַבֵּל Koheleth probably meant everything in life and not the entire universe.⁴⁴

Having introduced his theme⁴⁵, Koheleth proceeds to demonstrate how he came to such a conclusion.

CHAPTER 1 VERSE 3

MT:

מה יתרון לאדם בכל עמלו שיעמל תחת השמש

LXX: τίς περισσεύει τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐν παντί μόχθῳ αὐτοῦ ᾧ μόχθεῖ
ὑπὸ τὸν ἥλιον

P:

מה אולי נזכר כל בעל
דמיון בעל דמיון

V: quid habet amplius homo de universo labore suo quod
laborat sub sole

T: מה מותר אית לאנש בתר די ימות מן כל טורחיה דהוא טרח תחות שימשא
בעלמא הדין אלהן למעסק באוריתא לקבלא אגיר שלים לעלמא דאתי
קדם מרי עלמא

If V2 gives us the main theme of the book as a whole, the next verse (3), in the form of a rhetorical question, indicates the main thrust of this opening section. There is no real advantage to a man toiling hard at any kind of work on this earth. The author is being more specific in this verse since this is one of the conclusions which has led him to the more general statement that everything is futile.

The root עמל occurs frequently in Ecclesiastes, both as a verb עמל, and as a substantive עמל. It appears elsewhere in the Old Testament, though not as often, and seems to have the meaning 'trouble', 'sorrow' and 'suffering', and later 'toil', 'painful labour' which is the meaning here. H.L. Ginsberg claims that it means 'gain', 'earn (by toil)' in Ecclesiastes⁴⁶ - a meaning which it can have in the Talmud and in Aramaic⁴⁷, but it is interesting to note that the Targumist, in representing the root עמל, does not employ the same root in Aramaic; he uses the root טרח which means 'be busy', 'take pains'. This is significant; the Targumist has clearly avoided the root עמל. Further evidence against Ginsberg is to be found in the other versions, where LXX 'toil, hardship', V 'toil', P 'weary toil',⁴⁸ and Aquila κόπος 'exertion' seem to be in agreement.

It seems fairly certain that יתרון, although it does not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament, has the meaning

'advantage' or 'gain'. The root יתר points in that direction, the versions treat it in that way, and Rashi and Rashbam use the words מותר, שכר and גיוון to define its meaning.

The phrase תחת השמים is both peculiar to Koheleth in the Old Testament and characteristic of the book. Wildeboer suggests that it may be a Graecism⁴⁹ = ὑπ' ἡλίῳ, while Graetz⁵⁰ is confident that it is. However the phrase appears in two Phoenician inscriptions of Tabnith and Eshmunazar of the third century B.C.⁵¹, and as McNeile⁵² points out, Koheleth varies it with תחת השמים (1.13; 2.3; 3.1), and על הארץ (8.14; 8.16; 11.2); תחת השמים occurring elsewhere in the Old Testament (Exod. 17.14; Deut. 7.24; 9.14; et passim.) Hence it would seem to be unnecessary to postulate a Greek origin for the phrase although this is still possible.⁵³

MT is straightforward; LXX follows it word for word. P omits the suffix on עמל but it is unlikely that the translator read a different Hebrew text. The relative ׀ and the cognate verb which immediately follow obviate the need for the suffix and this probably accounts for the omission. The same thing occurs in 2.11, though at other times P includes the suffix, e.g. 2.18f.. For תחת השמים, P has 'under heaven'. Since this is not supported by any other version it is not a serious witness. It is possibly an example of exegesis on the

part of the translator, but since A is the only MS. of the Peshitta to have this reading it is more likely to be the result of a copying error (~~ܡܝܬܐ~~ and ~~ܡܝܬܐ~~ being quite similar in form). '

V corresponds to MT, while T alters the entire meaning of the passage with its additions:- 'What advantage has a man after he dies, from all his work in which he was engaged under the sun, in this world, except he has studied Torah in order to receive the perfect reward in the world to come, before the Lord of the world?' Koheleth's statement which was meant to question the worth of a man's toil, becomes the vehicle of Jewish teaching on the importance of Torah study relating to the world to come. Since the Targumist interprets 'under the sun' as 'in this world' the question arises (in every passage where the phrase occurs) of the world to come. It becomes a convenient introduction to the subject of the next world - a favourite with this Targumist.

Midrash Rabbah, having attempted to avoid the plain sense of v2, admits, at the beginning of its comments on v3, that the sages tried to suppress Koheleth because of the heretical teaching. They were concerned with the implications, in v3, for the study of the Torah. Does the reference to 'all his labour' include man's toil in the Torah? "After reconsidering, they stated: לא אמר בכל עמל אלא בעמלו ... must

exclude the study of Torah⁵⁴; the suffix indicates that secular toil only is in the author's mind. Two other statements are recorded: "Rabbi Huna and Rabbi Aha said in the name of Rabbi Hilfai: His toil is under the sun, but his treasury is above the sun. Rabbi Judan said: Under the sun he has no (profit), but he does have it above the sun." Both statements show that the term 'under the sun' has been interpreted as 'in this world'.⁵⁵

This concern for the scope of the phrase כל עמל is reflected in Rashi and Ibn Ezra. Rashi interprets תחת השמש as תמורת התורה 'barter of the Torah', referring to Prov. 6.23, where תורה is called light (= sun), and then asks the question, "What reward is there for the man who barter (מחליף) the study of the Torah for his own (secular) toil?" Ibn Ezra points out that the effort to seek out wisdom to enlighten the spirit has profit. Rashbam shows himself to be ahead of his time here with a clear and reasonable comment, adhering to the plain sense of the passage⁵⁶ and linking it with the statement at 2.24 where man is said to have nothing better than to eat and drink etc.

CHAPTER 1 VERSE 4

MT:

דור הלך ודור בא והארץ לעולם עמדת

LXX: γενεὰ πορεύεται καὶ γενεὰ ἔρχεται, καὶ ἡ γῆ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα
ἔσται

P: דור ארץ ודור בא ודור ארץ לעולם עמדת
עמדת

V: generatio praeterit et generatio advenit terra vero in
aeternum stat

T: אמר שלמה מלכא ברוח צבואה דרא סבא דצדיקיא דאזיל מן עלמא בגין
חובי דרא גישא דרשיעא דעתידין למיתוי בתריהון וארעא לעלמי
עלמין קיימא לסוברא פורעברתא דאתי על עלמא בגין חוביהון
דבני אבשא

The section 1.4-7 deals with the generations, the earth, the sun, the wind and the rivers. The monotony of the whole process is conveyed by the language (הלך is used six times,

נולד four times נול and נא twice each), the increasing length of the sentence, and the use of a series of participles.

הלך in this verse is used in the sense of 'dying' (cf. 5.15; Ps. 39.14; Jb. 10.21; 14.20) while נא conveys the idea of being born (cf. 5.15; Ps. 71.18). It is likely that these words were chosen - as opposed to מת and ילד - because of the idea of movement conveyed by them, an idea which is in contrast to the other verb in the verse. This, together with the fact that they are in active participial form communicates the idea of continuity.

The notion of endurance which is suggested by the root עמד is emphasised by being in the form of a participle עומד. The earth is contrasted with the generations. Man for all his colour and effort (v3), passes on, generation after generation, while the earth remains. This statement helps to define Koheleth's earlier claim הכל הבל. It is human existence in all its expressions that is meant by the term הבל; it does not include nature. The enduring character of the earth may contribute to the הבל, but the earth itself is not הבל; it is just the stage upon which the generations play their puny parts and continue their aimless, hopeless existence.

MT is not in question. The fact that the LXX and V translations of לעולם imply the eternity of the physical world, does not suggest that the respective translators are guilty of 'over-exegesis'. It is unavoidable that the Greek and Latin words should convey an idea foreign to Hebrew thought.⁵⁷

T again avoids the sense of the passage. "Solomon, the king, said, by the spirit of prophecy: 'The good generation of the righteous passes from the world because of the sins of the wicked generation which is to follow them; but the earth remains for ever, to reserve the punishment which is to happen to the world because of men's sins.'" Again we notice the homiletical interest prevailing and a result obtained which is altogether foreign to the thought of Koheleth. Koheleth Rabbah records a great deal of material which has little or no connection with the verse. In the midst of it all it records that "Rabbi Joshua b. Kornah said: 'It should have read - and the earth passes away, and the earth comes, and the generation remains for ever. For, which was created for which? surely the earth was created for a generation! But a generation decays, because it does not endure (עומר) with respect to the commands of the Holy One, blessed be He, while the earth, which endures (עומדת) with respect to the commands of the Holy One, blessed be He, does not decay.'"

Clearly this interpretation, like that of T, is not from the standpoint of Koheleth.

Rashi quotes Midrash Tanhuma which states⁵⁸, "All the righteous of Israel are called ארץ - Mal. 3.12

כי תהיו אדם ארץ חפץ . Since the term 'earth' refers to the 'righteous' the contrast must be with the wicked. Hence Rashi must understand דר in the sense of 'wicked (generation)'. This is not far from T. Rashbam again, comments briefly but to the point.⁵⁹

CHAPTER 1 VERSE 5

KT:

וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה

LXX: καὶ ἀνατέλλει ὁ ἥλιος καὶ δύνει ὁ ἥλιος καὶ εἰς τὸν τόπον
αὐτοῦ ἔλκει αὐτος ἀνατέλλον ἐκεῖ

P:

וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה

V: oritur sol et occidit et ad locum suum revertitur
ibique renascens

T:

וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּשׂ אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה

There is the suggestion that the first word should be amended to read נָרַר ⁶⁰ or נָרַרַר ⁶¹ on the grounds that a participle would be more appropriate here, since this section employs a series of participles to denote continuous movement (נָרַר may be read as part. as well as Qal 3rd pers. sing. masc.) But this change is unnecessary. וַיָּרַד consecutive with the perfect (in the case of נָרַר and נָרַרַר) after a part.

נָרַרַר (v4), produces the required frequentative tense.⁶² It is difficult to be certain as to the significance of the versions here but LXX $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \alpha\nu\alpha\tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\lambda\epsilon\iota$ and Aquila $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \alpha\nu\acute{\alpha}\tau\epsilon\iota\lambda\epsilon$ do not testify to a text other than MT.

וַיָּרַר is the chief problem in this verse, from the point of view of its meaning, its position in the sentence and its appropriateness. Its meaning seems to be 'to pant' or 'to be eager for'.⁶³ It should be noted, at this point, that the Masoretes have placed a 'zakef qaton' after וַיָּרַר thus making the text read 'And the sun rises, and the sun goes down, even unto its place ...' i.e. the place of its going down. But this is unsatisfactory, since the rest of the verse becomes awkward - $\text{וַיָּרַר הָרָא שָׁם}$ 'panting, it rises there'.

וַיָּרַר would have to refer to $\text{וַיָּרַר$ which, if taken as above, would mean that the sun rises where it sets. The only way to avoid this is to understand 'its place' as the whole unseen

area where the sun is at night; but this is to strain the text.⁶⁴ This punctuation is followed by Hengstenberg.⁶⁵ But the simplest solution is to transpose the 'zakef qaton' to . שראף . שם must refer to מקומו , but the latter need not now refer to the sun going down but to the place of rising. This disregard of the MT punctuation is supported by the versions, Rashi, Rashbam , Ibn Ezra, Luther and all modern scholars.

However, although many read contrary to the accents, some are suspicious of שראף itself and seek to emend the text here.⁶⁶ The versions seem to indicate that they had difficulty with the word. LXX 'draws', T 'crawls', P and V 'returns', Symmachus and Theodotion ἐκαναστρέφει = 'reverts' demonstrate this. Aquila ἐλκυσεν 'pants', supports MT, while T שחיק is too close in spelling to MT to suggest that the Targumist read another Hebrew text, viz. שחיק - there being no Hebrew root שחיק 'to crawl'. (In fact the text of the Targum in the editions of Sperber⁶⁷ and Levy⁶⁸ read שאיק at this point.) Furthermore, Jerome points out⁶⁹ that the Hebrew text read 'soeph' though the translation which he gives in his commentary is 'ducit', 'leads, moves on', and in the Vulgate, 'revertitur'. This variety among the ancient translators demonstrates the difficulty they had with the word itself, and in the context of the verse. It is possible that

they were embarrassed with the idea of the sun panting, and felt sure that they were reading a text which was corrupt.

The main suggested emendation originated with Graetz⁷⁰, viz. that $\eta\alpha\alpha$ should read $\eta\alpha$. This is followed by Jouvon⁷¹ and others⁷², the former pointing out the correspondence of η with α and α of the following two verses. Emended thus, the verse reads "... and returning to its place, rises there again."

Montgomery suggests that the suffix on $\alpha\alpha$ be deleted, and that $\eta\alpha$ be read $\eta\alpha = \alpha + \alpha$. He translates the reconstruction: '... unto the place where also he rises - there he is.'⁷³ But this is unconvincing. The sense that is desiderated here is that produced by the emendation of Graetz and the renderings of P and V.

If we settle for this emendation, holding that MT is corrupt here the sense of the passage is fairly straightforward; it has to do with the daily movements of the sun. It rises, it sets, it returns to its place and rises once more. T paraphrases but is rather subdued on this passage elaborating only on the sun's nocturnal activity - "... and proceeds by the path of the deep ..."

Apart from Aquila, and the reference to 'soeph' by Jerome, the sense contained in MT is not dealt with until Rashi.

The latter refers to the sun travelling during the night, "panting to return to its place" while Ibn Ezra comments, "... The meaning of שואף is like that in "in desire she snuffs (שוא) the wind" (Jer. 2:24), that is as if (the sun) snuffs the wind in its great desire to return to its place."

Rashbam is similar: "... and (the sun) travels all night long because it pants and hurries (מהיר) till, in the morning, it arrives at the place where it rose today."

Luther may have been influenced by these commentators, for he makes a point of disagreeing with V defining שוא "to draw breath" and adding that it is this "panting" of the sun on its journeys (east - west - east) which causes the winds.

The Authorised Version keeps to MT "... hasteth to its place ..." (cf. Rashbam) as do many commentaries and translations (the exceptions being those listed in n.72), but the fact that some accept the emendation offered by Graetz reflects the dissatisfaction with "pants to its place." Perhaps the meaning of שואף in this context eludes us.

CHAPTER I. VERSE 6

MT: הוֹלֵךְ אֶל דְּרוֹם וְסוּבָב אֶל צָפוֹן סוּבָב סָבַב הוֹלֵךְ הָרוּחַ וְעַל סְבִיבָתִי
שֶׁב הָרוּחַ

LXX: πορεύεται πρὸς νότον καὶ κυκλοῖ πρὸς βορρᾶν· κυκλοῖ κυκλῶν,
πορεύεται τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ ἐπὶ κύκλους αὐτοῦ ἐπιστρέφει
τὸ πνεῦμα.

P: אֶל צָפוֹן הָיָה הָרוּחַ וְעַתָּה הָיָה לְדָרוֹם
וְעַתָּה הָיָה לְצָפוֹן הָיָה הָרוּחַ וְעַתָּה הָיָה לְדָרוֹם

V: gyrat per meridiem et flectitur ad aquilonem iustitians
universa circuitu pergīt spiritus et in circulos
suos regreditur

T: אֶזֶל כָּל סָטֵר דְּרוֹמָא בִּימָמָא וּמַחְזֵר לְסָטֵר צָפוֹנָא בְּלֵילִיא אִוְרָא תְּהוּמָא
מַחְזֵר מַחְזֵר וְאֶזֶל לְרוּחַ עֵיבֵר דְּרוֹמָא בְּתַקּוּפַת בִּיסָן וְתַמוּזַּ וְעַל
סַחְרָנוּהִי תֵיב לְרוּחַ עֵיבֵר צָפוֹנָא בְּתַקּוּפַת תְּשֵׁרִי וְטַבַּת צִפְיָק
מַחְרָכִי מְדִיבְחָא בְּצַפְרָא וְאֶעִיל לְחֹרְכִי מְעֻרְבָא בְּרִמְשָׁא

The apparent difficulties with this verse are the late introduction of the subject הָרָחֹק, and the repetition of

הָרָחֹק. The latter may be accounted for when we compare the verse with 2.10 (repetition of לֵבַי) and 4.1 (repetition of the entire phrase וְאֵין לָהֶם מִנוּחַ) - that is to say it is a question of the style of Koheleth, a characteristic by which the author underlines what he is saying. In this case he uses it to illustrate the monotonous aspect of nature. (cf. also the repetition of דָּר and עָמַם in vv.4f.) This also accounts for the late introduction of הָרָחֹק. The predicate, which indicates the monotony, comes first, as it does in the second clause of the same verse. By the time the subject appears in the verse, the mood, already obtaining in vv.4f., is re-established. The subject is, to a certain extent, incidental; its repetition draws attention to it and then only to indicate the tedium of the whole movement.

The participles, already in evidence in vv.4f. appear in this verse also. They express continuance, and, when they are repeated they emphasise this. We note that סָבַב is repeated no less than three times, together with סִבְבוּתָיו the 'nomen actionis' of סָבַב; הִלָּךְ occurs twice, and שָׁב - itself expressing repetition - once.

'North' and 'South' are probably used in this verse to complete the four directions - 'east' and 'west' being implied

in the rising and setting of the sun in v5.

LXX had difficulty with the latter part of v5 and linked v6a with it, understanding 6a to refer to the sun and not to the wind ('... arising there it proceeds southwards, then turns northwards ...'). This misunderstanding is probably due to the late introduction of the subject 'the wind'. In an unpunctuated text this would be easily done, and especially so with a translator who adheres rigidly to the Hebrew word order. It should, however, be pointed out that this mistake may not have originated with the LXX, since P V and T also predicate 6a of the sun. On the other hand Midrash Rabbah knows nothing of this interpretation and, since LXX is the oldest version, it is likely that the error originated there and for the reasons outlined above.

But to take 6a thus is to misunderstand the intention of the author. He has made his point with regard to the sun in v5; to add to that a clause which does not elaborate on the idea of monotony is to rob the previous section of much of its impact. As C.D. Ginsburg remarks, "this predicates too much of the sun and too little of the wind."⁷⁴

The LXX translator probably envisaged 6a as referring to the tendency of the sun to move towards the south and north during the course of the day. T⁷⁵, which takes the whole of the verse to refer to the sun (taking *הרומ* to mean 'side' or

'direction'), understands the movement northwards as the path of the sun after dark. Rashi also forces the whole verse to speak of the sun, taking הָרוּחַ as the רוּחַ of the sun - 'talent' in Old French (i.e. desire, inclination) - and goes on to liken the sun to the wicked:- whatever they may achieve they return to the place from which they came, in their case, a place of defilement. Rashbam follows Rashi insofar as he understands v6 to refer to the sun, but Midrash Rabbah takes the subject of the verse to be הָרוּחַ = the wind. There is nothing in the Midrash which even alludes to the other interpretations which must have been extant at its compilation. Ibn Ezra, however, refers to those who predicate v6 of the sun and explicitly opposes them. Luther is confused. He takes הָרוּחַ to refer to the sun (following V), but he translates הָרוּחַ 'ventus', explaining that when the sun returns to the east to rise again it snatches the wind in its hand, and brings the wind with it. Sforzo reverts to the view that v6 speaks of the sun while Mendelssohn, although he begins his comments on v6 with "He speaks now concerning the wind" he ends with the statement that the expression 'going to the south and turning to the north' applies both to the sun and to the wind in that they have the same course. Of the later commentators it would seem that Graetz⁷⁶ alone follows the interpretation of LXX; the others stand with Ibn Ezra, taking the whole verse

to refer to the wind.

We conclude that the style of v6 is in accordance with the mood of the author. The whole verse breathes of one who watches the monotonous predictability of nature⁷⁷ which mocks the fleeting, futile and uncharted processes of human life.

CHAPTER 1 VERSE 7

MT: כל הנהלים והלכים אל הים והים אבגר מלא אל מקום שהנהלים
הלכים שם הם שבין ללכת

LXX: πάντες οἱ χεῖμαρροι πορεύονται εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ ἡ
θάλασσα οὐκ ἔσται ἐμπιπλομένη· εἰς τόπον οἱ χεῖμαρροι
πορεύονται, ἐκεῖ αὐτοὶ ἐπιστρέφουσιν τοῦ πορευθῆναι

P: כל הנהלים והלכים אל הים והים אבגר מלא אל מקום שהנהלים

הלכים שם הם שבין ללכת

V: omnia flumina intrant mare et mare non redundat ad
locum unde exeunt flumina revertentur ut iterum fluant

T: כל בחליא ומבועי מיא אזלין ובגדין למי אוקיינוס ומסחר לעלמא
כגושפבא ואוקיינוס ליתוהי מתמלי ולאחר דבחליא אזלין
ובגדין תמן איבון תייבין למיזל מצבורי תהומא

The first half of this verse states the phenomenon that the sea never fills up in spite of the constant inflow of all streams, and in the light of the previous verses and of the section as a whole, the implication is that in spite of the regularity these rivers accomplish nothing. This is not to say that Koheleth views nature as הכל (cf. our remarks on v4) - his concern is with the empty life men have to lead - but very little of a positive character is said of nature, and in fact the author may see the processes of nature as a convenient backdrop to the futility of human existence. The second half of the verse describes the continuous movement of the waters to the sea.

The term נחל is used here probably because the author wants to include all flowing water (from wadi and river bed) and not merely that from the נהר. אל מקום שהנחלים ;

מקום is in the construct state here before ש, the relative pronoun⁷⁸ (cf. Hos. 2.1; Jer. 22.12; 2 Sam. 15.21).

LXX follows MT exactly. In P, the first הלכים is translated by ^{נחל} 'flow', and the second by the equivalent Syriac ^{ܢܚܠܐ}. This is probably a matter of style rather than that the P translator had a different Hebrew text, since the root ^{נחל} 'to flow' is not found in Hebrew. P simply captures the sense of the Hebrew הלכים which, in this case, means 'flow'. For ^{נחל} P has ^{נחל} which might suggest a

Hebrew text reading שמה ; however, it should be noted that after verbs of motion, שם frequently has the sense of שמה (cf. Jer. 22.27; 1 Sam. 9.6), and the P translator has merely understood this and has translated accordingly.

The crux in this verse is the role of שבים in the final clause. Is the sense that the rivers 'return', or is this an auxiliary use of שר ? In so far as P follows MT word for word it does not throw any light on the exegesis here, but LXX seems to give a sense agreeable with the auxiliary use of שר - "there they flow again" or "there they keep on flowing" (cf. LXX on Deut. 30.9 where the same construction is used to render ישר לשוש which must have the sense of "rejoicing again"). Aquila follows LXX here.

V is interesting: "... unto the place from whence the rivers come they return, to flow again", which is similar to Symmachus: εἰς τὸν τόπον ἀφ' οὗ οἱ ποταμοὶ πορεύονται ἐκεῖ αὐτοὶ ἀναστρέφουσιν "to that place from which the rivers flow thither they return". It is not that both Jerome and Symmachus had a Hebrew text which differed from MT, having משם for שם, it is simply that both have understood the phrase שבים ללכת as referring to the return of the river waters to their sources. That this is so is seen from the rendering of T - "All rivers and streams of water flow into the waters of the ocean which surround the world like a ring,

but the ocean is not filled; and to the place where the rivers flow, there ^{they} flow again through the channels of the deep" which clearly alludes to the belief that the water of the sea travels by way of unseen channels back to the river sources.

The interpretations in Koheleth Rabbah are, for the most part, allegorical, but reference is made to the process of evaporation and condensation, which may be a reference to the water returning from the sea but this is not explicitly stated. The latter idea is spelled out by Ibn Ezra, however, who gives a detailed account of the process. Rashi understands the phrase to mean that the waters return again to their source: "... the streams flow through caves beneath the hills from the ocean ...", while Mendelssohn is undecided as to the means by which the waters return to their sources - by evaporation or by subterranean channels. It is difficult to be certain how Rashbam has understood the phrase since he merely repeats the phraseology of MT, but he does not allude to subterranean channels or to evaporation. He proceeds, "... And tomorrow they flow again into the sea, for rivers do not leave off their habit, and their flowing, but man leaves his habit and his way in that he passes from the world. Everything refers back to 'What advantage ...'".

The trouble with the view that the waters return to their sources is that the translators and commentators have asked of

the text questions with which it is not concerned. The idea in this verse is that, although the sea never fills up the rivers continue to flow into it. To lapse into a scientific explanation of why the sea never fills up is to lose the edge of the argument. Consequently we feel that the interpretation of וַיִּשָּׂא as an auxiliary verb carrying the idea of repetition, is the most suitable one in the context.

Nevertheless there is no unanimity even today. There are those⁷⁹ who take וַיִּשָּׂא as an auxiliary verb but there remain quite a number⁸⁰ who feel that it refers to the waters returning to their sources.

CHAPTER 1 VERSE 8

MT: כל הדברים יגעים לא יוכל איש לדבר לא תשוב עיך לראות ולא
תמלא אמת

LXX: πάντες οἱ λόγοι ἔγχοποι οὐ δυνήσεται ἀνὴρ τοῦ λαλεῖν, καὶ
οὐ πληθήσεται ὀφθαλμὸς τοῦ ὁρᾶν, καὶ οὐ πληρωθήσεται
οὐδὲ ἀπὸ ἀκροάσεως

P: כִּי כָל דְּבָרִים יִגְעִים לֹא יוּכַל אִישׁ לְדַבֵּר
לֹא תִשָּׁבַע עֵינֶיךָ לְרֹאשׁוֹ וְלֹא תִמָּלֵא אֱמֶת

V: cunctae res difficiles non potest eas homo explicare
sermone non saturatur, oculus visu nec auris impletur
auditu

T: כל פתגמיא דעתידין למהוי בעלמא אשתליהאן בהון בבייא קדמאין
ולא יכילו למשכח סופיהון ברסהכי לית ליה דשו לגבר למללא
מה דעתיד למיתי בתרוהי ולא יכילא עינא למחזי כל מה דעתידי
למהוי בעלמא ולא יכילא אודנא לאתמלא מלמשמע כל פתגמי דכל
דירי ארעא

Although most of the Hebrew in this verse is straightforward, the first clause is not easy. כל הדברים may be either 'all things' or 'all words'. The author uses דברים elsewhere in the book thirteen times, and in each case the meaning 'words' is the one desiderated, hence there seems to be a pointer in this direction. Added to this are over twenty examples in Koheleth of הכל used for 'all things'; if the phrase כל הדברים is to be rendered in the same way then this is the only instance in the book. Again, the section 1.2-11 is a unity and begins with הכל הנל and the subsequent verses elaborate on this theme. If the author wished to repeat the subject of v.2 he would surely have used הכל once more. We feel that since כל הדברים is following דברים of v.7, the particular meaning of דברים i.e. 'words' is likely to have been in the mind of the author. We notice also that the cognate verb דבר follows directly in the next clause.

יגע is difficult. As it stands it is a m. pl. adj. - 'weary', from the root יָגַע or יָגַע 'to toil' and 'to grow or be weary', and is the predicate of כל הדברים. The word occurs elsewhere in the Old Testament - Deut. 25.18 and 2 Sam. 17.2 where it has the sense of 'weary'.

LXX follows MT closely. That the translator took דברים to mean 'words' is not altogether certain; in his concern to

adhere rigidly to the Hebrew in order and detail, his rendering πάντες οἱ λόγοι merely preserves the ambiguity of the original.

P has one or two differences but is difficult to translate. It has ~~ܡܠܝܬܐ~~ ~~ܡܠܝܬܐ~~ for ~~ܡܠܝܬܐ~~ ~~ܡܠܝܬܐ~~ . Although the root ~~ܡܠܝܬܐ~~ does not occur in Syriac, the roots ~~ܡܠܝܬܐ~~ and ~~ܡܠܝܬܐ~~ 'to find'⁸¹ may be used as auxiliary verbs meaning 'to be able'. However, the translator seems to have decided that the root ~~ܡܠܝܬܐ~~, which is used later in the verse, would suit just as well here. (It is unlikely that the Syriac translator had a Hebrew text different from MT, for, apart from having no support from the other versions, P does not read as smoothly as MT; it is probably the difficulty occasioned by the root ~~ܡܠܝܬܐ~~ which has caused the problem.) As far as ~~ܡܠܝܬܐ~~ is concerned P, like LXX, has preserved the ambiguity of MT.

V translates 'all things', and I is in agreement⁸²: "In everything which shall happen in this world the ancient prophets exerted themselves, but they were unable to find out their end; so a man cannot speak of what shall happen after him, nor shall the eye be able to see all that shall be in the world, nor is the ear able to hear all the words of all the inhabitants of the earth." Midrash Rabbah seems to have preserved both interpretations when it speaks of idle talk handicrafts and heretical words wearying a man while Jerome in

his commentary gives the other interpretation: "Omnes sermones ...".⁸³ Rashi and Rashbam take דברים as 'things' while Ibn Ezra takes it as 'words'. There is still no unanimity on this.⁸⁴

We have already referred to יגעים . LXX and P take it in the way it appears in Deut. 25.18 and 2 Sam. 17.2, viz. in the passive sense, 'weary, wearied'. V departs from the meaning of the word with the rendering "All things are difficult .." - a meaning which, incidentally, Jerome has also in his commentary.⁸⁵ T is so fanciful that it is difficult to know how the translator understood it. He seems to have taken it to be a participle, (if this is the logical conclusion to be drawn from the rendering אשתלהיאר 'they exerted themselves') but he does not associate it with דברים : 'the ancient prophets' are the subject here. Midrash Rabbah takes it as an active participle with דברים as the subject - דברי הבטלה

Idle words weary a man" and this interpretation is followed by Rashi. Rashbam uses עיף to define the word i.e. 'faint', while Ibn Ezra alludes to those who interpret יגעים like מלאים i.e. as a Piel of לאה . He objects, pointing out that if this were so it would be written מיגעים , and indicates that it is the דברים themselves which are יגעים the meaning of which he gives as נלאים וחסרים 'wearied and wanting'.

But while we feel Ibn Ezra has made the correct point⁸⁶ here regarding יגעים , there are those⁸⁷ who adhere to the interpretation which seems to have originated in Midrash Rabbah.

The point Koheleth is making here is that, having shown in a few examples of nature, the regularity and permanence of its operation, contrasting with the impermanence and futility of man's existence, human words are wearied and wanting in the effort to continue the description. The next clause virtually explains the first - "one cannot explain". The verse continues "The eye cannot see it all, nor the ear hear it all". Man's understanding is overwhelmed; his articulateness is called in question.


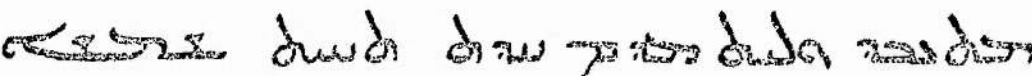
CHAPTER 1 VERSE 9

MT:

מה שהיה הוא שיהיה ומה שבעשה הוא שיעשה

ואין כל חדש תחת השמש

LXX: τί τὸ γεγονός; αὐτὸ τὸ γενησόμενον· καὶ τί τὸ πεποιημένον;
αὐτὸ τὸ ποιηθισόμενον· καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἅν πρόσφατον ὑπὸ
τὸν ἥλιον

P: 


V: quid est quod fuit ipsum quod futurum est
quid est quod factum est ipsum quod fiendum est
10) nihil sub sole novum ...

T: מה דהות מן קדמתא הוא עתיד למהוי בתר כן ומה דאתעביד מן קדמת
דבא הוא עתיד לאתעובדא עד סוף כל דרי עלמא ולית כלום פתגם
חדת בעלמא הדין תחות שמשא

It has been argued that Koneleth exhibits here influence of the Stoic theory of cycles⁸⁸, but this is not necessarily so. It is true Koneleth seems to suggest that history repeats itself to some extent (cf. also 3.15) but he does not betray any belief in the 'all-destroying catastrophe', nor does he speak of the repetition of the details of a former cycle. In fact his references to nature in the verses preceding this one would militate against the theory, in that the processes of nature might be said to be incessant! The reference to the earth remaining לעולם must surely call in question the feasibility of Tyler's thesis. Ranston points out that the author's thought is much simpler and lacks many of the essential elements of the Stoic theory.⁸⁹

The construction /ש מה is peculiar (in the Old Testament) to Koneleth. It occurs here, and in 3.15,22; 8.7; 10.14 and has the meaning, 'that which'⁹⁰, and in 6.10 and 7.24 where it means 'whatever'. We would normally expect אשר and כל אשר to express these meanings.⁹¹ מה is

usually interrogative in Biblical Hebrew, but there are occasions where it is used to denote 'whatever' (Job. 13.13), and 'something, anything' (Gen. 39.8; Prov. 9.13).⁹²

Delitzsch further observes⁹³ that the term מי or מי אשר, used in the sense of 'whoever', is found in Exod. 24.14; 32.33, and we note that /ש מי occurs in the Dead Sea Scrolls⁹⁴ and

both /מָה שׁ and /מִי שׁ are found frequently in the Mishnah.⁹⁵ Consequently, we feel that the book of Koheleth exhibits here a style of Hebrew, later than any other in the Old Testament.

. . . ואין כל חדש . "There is no new thing . ." - an absolute negation. We might compare Dan. 1.4(ק) אין בהם כל מלם ; Nu. 11.6 אין כל ; and Deut. 8.9 לא תחסר כל בזה . Barton notes⁹⁶ that the construction passed over into New Testament idiom - cf. οὐκ ἔστιν Matt. 24.22; Lk. 1.37.

LXX "What is that which has been? The very thing which shall take place. And what is that which has been done? The very thing which shall be done" is curious. At first sight it might seem that the translator was unfamiliar with the construction /מָה שׁ and so took it to be מָה interrogative plus שׁ , but it should be noted that the translator does not fail to understand the other instances of the phrase in the book (e.g. 3.15). The mistake may have come about because of the form of the sentence; both parts can easily be read as interrogatives. The הוּא in each case might encourage the translator to take it as the beginning of the answer to the question posed. The same might be said of V "What is it that has been? The same thing that shall be. What is it that has been done? The same that shall be done" - only here does Jerome misunderstand the construction.⁹⁷ Both P and T have

no difficulty here, having the equivalent Syriac and Aramaic in each case but Luther⁹⁸ follows V "Quale est id quod fuit? Illud ipsum, quod futurum est ...", "Whatever is it that has been? That very thing that shall be ...". (V, it should be noted, attaches the last stich of the verse to v.10).

V is quite subdued: "What happened formerly will happen again, and what was done in times past will be done again until the end of all generations of the world; and there is no new thing in this world, under the sun." Apart from its reference to 'in this world' it is virtually a paraphrase of the Hebrew. Rashi says little except to point out that while it is generally true that there is nothing new, "he who studies Torah continually finds new arguments", while Rashbam cleverly perceives that Koheleth is speaking of the futility of life and sees the verse in its context. He comments: "What advantage (יתרון cf. 1.3) has man from all these (things)?" referring to the movements in nature already discussed. Rashbam understands that if there is no חן there is no יתרון .

CHAPTER 1 VERSE 10

MT: יש דבר שיאמר ראה זה חוש הוא כבר היה לעלמים אשר היה מלפנבו

LXX: ὃς λαλήσει καὶ ἔρεῖ Ἴδε τοῦτο καινόν ἐστιν, ἤδη γέγονεν
ἐν τοῖς αἰῶσιν τοῖς γενομένοις ἀπὸ ἔμπροσθεν ἡμῶν

F: כל העולם והאדם לא ידעו שיש עוד אדם כזה

ספר ישעיהו פרק י' פסוק י'

V: nec valet quisquam dicere ecce hoc
recens est iam enim praecessit in saeculis quae
fuerunt ante nos

T: אית פתגם דיימר איגש חזי דין פתגם חדת הוא הא כבר הוה
לעלמין ביומי דריא די הור לקדמנא

This verse, following on what has been said in v.9, states that there will always be someone who will declare that something is new; but this 'new' thing will be found to have already taken place long ago.

כבר meaning 'already' occurs here and elsewhere in Koheleth (2.12, 16; 3.15 bis; 4.2; 6.10; 9.6f.) but nowhere else in the Old Testament. The word appears in Syriac⁹⁹, but usually it has the meaning 'perhaps', though occasionally it means 'already'. It does not often appear in Targumic Aramaic, according to Gordis¹⁰⁰, though it is used in Targum Koheleth to translate the above passages. It is frequently used in Mishnaic Hebrew, however, with the same meaning as in Koheleth. This is further evidence of the lateness of our book.

Since עלמים is the antecedent of אשר it would be more natural to have היר for היה following. Wright observes that "several MSS have corrected the irregularity..."¹⁰¹ but notes the same anomaly in 2.7 בני בית היה לי . He suggests that it is probably to be explained by regarding the verb as neuter.¹⁰²

יש דבר שיאמר "There may be something of which a man may say ..". Barton and McNeile¹⁰³ suggest that LXX and P had a Hebrew text which read שידבר ושיאמר . There is certainly a similarity between LXX and P here in that דבר of MT has been taken as a verbal and not a nominal form, but LXX "(There

may be a man) who may speak and say ... and P "Anyone who speaks and says ..." are not identical, /א לא is not equivalent to $\delta\varsigma$ (cf. Sh which translates LXX /א $\delta\varsigma$). We feel, however, that since T "There may be something of which a man may say ..." and Symmachus ἀρα εἴτις τι ὁ ἐρεῖ "Is there something of which someone may say ..." support MT, and since V also had trouble with the text, that MT probably lies behind LXX and P, but that the translators failed to cope with the construction. It is possible that they had a text where שׁ read שׁי - due to the error of a copyist - and that the translators concluded that שׁי belonged to דבר as in the case of the following שיאמר and attempted to translate accordingly. V, having included the last stich of v.9 in v.10, continues "... neither is anyone able to say: Behold this is new ..." (which reminds us of לא יוכל איש לדבר of v.8) but in his commentary Jerome renders: "Estne verbum de quo dicatur ..." Is there a thing of which it is said ..." which shows that V is not a serious witness to the text.

LXX has (γεγονεν) ἐν τοῖς αἰῶσι for לעלמים, but ἐν may be dittography of the final two letters of the previous word and, it should be noted, Codex Alexandrinus omits the $\epsilon' \nu$. The reading τοῖς γενομένοις for אשר היה is probably a case of the translator 'correcting' the Hebrew rather than that he read a Hebrew text which read היר.

Symmachus, according to Jerome, 'corrected' also by reading the singular עולם with הוּא - "... in saeculo quod fuit ante nos".¹⁰⁴

Midrash Rabbah offers an explanation of the verse: "... Scripture, Mishnah, halachoth, oral laws not included in the Mishnah, homiletical expositions and decrees which shall be made by great scholars in the future, already existed; they were communicated as a law to Moses from Sinai", and goes on to apply this by encouraging the reader "... if you have heard Torah from the mouth of a scholar, consider it as if you had heard it from Mount Sinai". Rashi, linking this verse with the next, points out that the reason a thing may seem new is that there is no remembrance of ראשונים .

CHAPTER 1 VERSE 11

MT: אין זכרון לדאשנים וגם לאחרנים שיהיו לא יהיה להם זכרון
עם שיהיו לאחרבה

LXX: οὐκ ἔστιν μνήμη τοῖς πρώτοις, καὶ γε τοῖς ἔσχατοις
γενομένοις· οὐκ ἔσται αὐτῶν μνήμη μετὰ τῶν γεννησόμενων
εἰς τὴν ἔσχατην

P: לא יהיה זכרון לדאשנים ולא לאחרנים
ועם שיהיו לאחרבה לא יהיה זכרון
להם

V: non est priorum memoria sed nec eorum quidem quae postea
futura sunt erit recordatio apud eos qui futuri sunt
in novissimo

T: לית זכרובא לדריא קדמאין ואף לבתראין דעתידין למהוי לא יהי
להון זכרובא עם דריא דיהון ביומי מלכא משיחא

This verse follows on from the previous one, though perhaps not in the way Rashi suggests. It may be that Koheleth had in mind that men, mistakenly exclaim, 'Here is something new!' because they forget what has happened in the past. It is more in keeping with Koheleth's philosophy, however, to understand that the mistake is made because men do not know what has happened in the past. But the idea of the past gives rise to the thought that former generations are remembered no more, and Koheleth presents this as another aspect of the futility of man's existence. The verse is a unit in the opening section of the book (vv.2-11). Not only do generations come and go (v.4), they are not remembered by succeeding generations - there is no יִתְרֵן for man for all his effort.

זָכְרוֹן : Since זָכְרוֹן occurs later in the verse, this form is probably the construct state before the preposition ל (cf. 2.16; Is. 9.2 שָׁמַח בְּקִצִּיר and Hos. 9.6 מִחְמֵד לִכְסֹף), and not as Delitzsch suggests¹⁰⁵, a variation in spelling of

זָכְרוֹן . As Barton observes¹⁰⁶, there are no instances of זָכְרוֹן as absolute, and therefore no evidence for Delitzsch's remark. He goes on, "... wherever זָכְרוֹן occurs, except here and in 2.16, it is in the construct state (cf. Lev. 23.24; Is. 57.8)."¹⁰⁷ The construct before a preposition occurs also in the Mishnah (e.g. Aboth 5.11,15).

The translation problem in this verse is ראשונים and אחרונים. Do the words refer to people or events or things? Elsewhere in the Old Testament former things are represented by ראשונות and where the meaning is former generations we get ראשונים (cf. Is. 41.42; 43.9,18; 46.9; 48.3; Deut. 19.14; Lev. 26.45). The same is true of אחרונים. To translate it 'future things' is to give it a meaning which belongs to אחרונות, a meaning which it does not have elsewhere. This use of the f. pl. of ראשון and אחרון for 'former and latter things', and the m. pl. for 'generations' continues in Talmudic Hebrew.

The problem arises, in this verse, when we make the connection between v.10 and v.11. If דבר means 'thing' in v.10 then it is tempting to read ראשונים as 'former things'.

Gordis maintains¹⁰⁸ that LXX and V translate 'former things' but this is to claim to know what was in the mind of the respective translators. The renderings in both these versions could be translated either 'former things' or 'those of old'. In fact Sh translates LXX ~~לדבר~~ i.e. 'former men or people'.¹⁰⁹ It is true Jerome in his commentary¹¹⁰ offers another translation "non est memoria primis ..", "there is no remembrance of first things .." but it does not follow that his understanding of the passage here is the same as when he translated the Vulgate; indeed the fact that the

translation of ראשונים differs in commentary and Vulgate suggests a difference of interpretation. P's rendering is the same as S^h, which indicates that the translator read

ראשונים as 'former generations' or 'those of old'.

לדור קדמי ד' "of former generations" is in no doubt as to what the Hebrew means: "There is no remembrance of former generations, and even of those who will come afterwards, there will be no remembrance of them among the generations which will be in the time of King Messiah."

Midrash Rabbah makes the passage refer to historical people - the generation of the flood, the Sodomites, the Amalekites and the Egyptians; but there is no appreciation of the futility which Koheleth feels in this verse. The Midrash interpreters fail to cope with the general statement of the author that men are forgotten by the succeeding generation. It is difficult to tell whether Rashi and Ibn Ezra read ראשונים as men or things but in view of Rashi's remark already alluded to (on v.10) it would seem he understood it to mean 'former things'. Ibn Ezra is not explicit enough for us to be certain, but Rashbam spells out his understanding of the passage "men created before us in the world .."¹¹¹ Again he is perceptive enough to link this verse with מה יתרן of v.3.

Luther translates¹¹²: "Non est recordatio priorum et non erit recordatio eorum, quae postea accident apud posteros",

"There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of things which will happen later, among those who come after"; "priorum" is ambiguous as was pointed out in connection with V, but "accident" shows how Luther has understood the passage.

Since Luther there has been no unanimity on the question of ראשונים . Some¹¹³ have translated "former things or times"; others¹¹⁴, 'former people or generations'.

But to take ראשונים as 'former things' is to reduce somewhat the point Koheleth makes here. It is to read this verse merely as a reason for the mistaken exclamation of v.10, with no point of its own. There is nothing futile in not being able to remember what happened in the distant past; the futility exists, however, if men are unremembered by those who follow them, and if they know they will not be remembered when they die.

CHAPTER 1 VERSE 17

MT:

ראתנה לבי לדעת חכמה ודעת הוללות ושכלות 'ידעת' שגם זה
הוא רציון רוח

LXX: καὶ ἔδωκα καρδίαν μου τοῦ γινῶναι σοφίαν καὶ γνῶσιν,
παρβολὰς καὶ ἐπιστήμην ἔγνων ἐγώ. ὅτι καὶ γε
τοῦτ' ἔστιν προαίρεσις πνεύματος

P:

כחמא כחמא כחמא כחמא
כחמא כחמא כחמא כחמא
כחמא כחמא כחמא

V: dedique cor meum ut scirem prudentiam atque doctrinam
erroresque et stultitiam et agnovi quod in his quoque
esset labor et afflictio spiritus

T:

ניהבית לבבי למדע חוכמתא וחולחלתא דמלכותא ומבדעא וסוכלתנא
בחבית למדע דאף דין הוא תכירות רוחא לגבר דמשתדל למשכח יתהון

In the section (1.12-18) koheleth conveys the idea that his intellectual efforts to find a meaning in life were futile. He had applied himself to his investigation with thoroughness and with vigour (v.13). He had become wiser than all who were before him in Jerusalem (v.16). In this verse (17) he indicates that his search extended to include הללות and רעיון רוח but that the end result was the same, viz. רעיון רוח (cf. v.14 הבל ורעות רוח).

The Masoretic pointing וָדַעַת following חכמה . . . indicates that this has been read as an infinitive, corresponding to לדעת earlier in the verse. '... to know חכמה and to know הללות and שכלות. The versions had the same consonantal text but read it differently by placing the zakef qaton over וָדַעַת and pointing וָדַעַת thereby obtaining the sense '... to know חכמה and דעת, הללות and שכלות'.



The interpretation of the versions is probably correct.

לדעת can govern all four words, and the latter are more smoothly grouped in two pairs. The Masoretic reading of one word being governed by the first דעת and the other two by the second דעת is unnecessarily clumsy.

For הללות and שכלות LXX has 'parables and understanding' and חכמה ודעת agrees. T "wisdom and the intrigues of the kingdom and knowledge and intelligence",


paraphrasing and rearranging the words a little, takes הללות as 'intrigues'¹¹⁵ of the kingdom', and שכלות as 'intelligence', while V 'errors and folly' has taken שכלות as an alternative spelling or as a mis-spelling of סכלות .

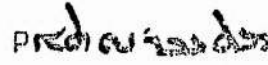
Apart from 1.17 there are no other instances of שכלות in the Old Testament; however, since סכלות appears in Koheleth at 2.3, 12, 13; 7.25; 10.1, 13; and is grouped with הללות in 2.12; 7.25; and 10.13 it is likely that the Vulgate's interpretation is correct. And since the root שכל means 'to be prudent' the form שכלות may have seemed to the translators of LXX, P and T to be an abstract noun meaning 'understanding'. The translators would be further encouraged to come to this conclusion on the grounds of their belief in the Solomonic authorship of the book; they would wish to avoid linking his name with 'folly'.

Of the six instances of סכלות in Koheleth P translates it three times (1.17; 2.3, 12) by  and three by  'folly', while the LXX takes it variously - εὐφροσύνη 'merriment' (2.3) ἀφροσύνη 'folly' (2.12, 13; 10.1, 13) and ὀχλήριον 'trouble' (7.25), V always renders 'stultitia', 'folly' (the only exception to this is in 7.25 where the word סכל having already been translated 'stultitia', the translator renders וסכלות הללות by 'errorem imprudentium', "the error of the imprudent") and T


שטות (2.13, 13; 10.13), טפשות (10.1) 'folly', and סוכלתנור (2.12; 7.25) 'understanding'. The Vulgate alone therefore, is consistent in its understanding of מכלות while the others reflect 'difficulty with the word'.

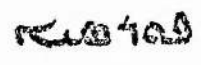
For Rashi there is no problem with the word; he defines it with שטות "folly". But Ibn Ezra defines it as "the opposite of הללות madness", and Rashbam takes it to mean "wisdom". Luther, influenced perhaps by the rendering of V, understands the word as 'imprudentia', 'folly'¹¹⁶, and Mendelssohn seems to have had no difficulty either.

The word הללות which is found only in Kohaleth, is also a problem with the versions. It has the meaning 'madness'. The LXX παραβολας and P.  'parables' agree, though elsewhere in the book the word is rendered by both versions with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

e.g. 2.12 LXX παραφορὰν 'error'; P.  'foolishness'

7.25 LXX περιφορὰν 'derangement'; P. " "

9.3 LXX περιφέρεια 'error'; P.  'error'

10.13 LXX περιφέρεια 'error'; P.  'shame'

We have, therefore, in 1.17 an example of the close connection that exists sometimes between LXX and P.

Since T consistently takes הללות as 'intrigues of the kingdom' and V as 'errores' we feel confident in asserting that MT is the authentic reading for both הללות and

שכלות. The reason for the confusion may be that the LXX translator was puzzled by the phrase הללות ושכלות. שכלות seemed to him to come from the root שכל 'to be prudent', hence his rendering ἐπιστήμην; he may have translated הללות by παραφοράς and his text may have read ... σοφίαν καὶ γνῶσιν, παραφοράς καὶ ἐπιστήμην. Since three out of four of these words refer to knowledge of some kind παραφοράς might seem to a copyist to be a mistake and be changed to παραβολὰς. P then follows LXX because of the difficulty experienced in reading the Hebrew.¹¹⁷

Midrash Rabbah does not comment on this verse, but on 2.12 where הללות occurs again, we read that R. Hanina b. Papa says that הללות refers to the הוללה של מלכות 'intrigues'¹¹⁸ of the kingdom', and T is probably an Aramaic rendering of this phrase.

Rashi seems to have had no trouble with the word which he defines as "idiocy" and "confusion" and the same can be said for Ibn Ezra, Rashbam and Luther.¹¹⁹

The versions then point to the authenticity of the consonantal text of MT but reflect a superior reading of that text in הַלְלוּ for הַלְלוּ.

But having reached that point we still have the problem of interpretation. In the passage vv. 16+18 the words חכמה and תעב occur four times and three times respectively and

are clearly the main idea in the author's mind. הללות
and שכלות occur once. We note that v.18 begins 'For in
much wisdom knowledge, ..' and does not mention the
הללות and שכלות of v.17. Consequently some scholars
see הללות and שכלות as an intrusion¹²⁰ and read only
חכמה ודעת. Others on the other hand feel that it is

חכמה ודעת which are the intruding words here - the insertion
of a pious editor.¹²¹

Lordis¹²² takes 'madness and folly' to be the predicate
of 'wisdom and knowledge', and translates 'And I applied my
mind and learnt that wisdom and knowledge is madness and folly..' but apart from being grammatically unconvincing this renders the
closing clause superfluous and awkward. If we omit חכמה ודעת
with Jastrow then v.18 does not follow v.17; and if we omit

הללות ושכלות with Ginsburg then v.17a seems unnecessarily
repetitious after v.16. The text as it stands may not be as
smooth as some scholars require but we agree with Barton¹²³
that Koheleth is indicating that he investigated the possibility
of wisdom and its opposite, concluding that even this thorough
search for truth was fruitless.

The word רעיון is used by Koheleth on three occasions -
here and 4.16 where it is linked with רוח and 2.22 where
we find לב in place of רוח. In 4.16 the phrase רעיון רוח

is connected with הבל and reminds us of the characteristic phrase רעות רוח (cf. 1.14; 2.11, 17, 26; 4.6; 6.9;) which is frequently linked with הבל. It is therefore likely that both phrases have the same meaning, that is to say, for Koheleth, רעיון is probably equivalent to רעות in the same way as דמיון (Ps 17.12) is equivalent to דמות. However, the meaning of this phrase is not easily decided upon.

The versions are divided in their understanding of this phrase.

XX	προαίρεσις πνεύματος	"plan (or choice) of the spirit (or wind)"
Aquila (1.14)	νομή ανέμου	"feeding of wind"
Symmachus	νομή ανέμου	"
" (1.14)	βόσκησις ανέμου	"
" (4.6)	καχώσεως πνεύματος	"oppression of the spirit"
" (6.9)	κάκωσις πνεύματος	"
P	רעיון הלב	"anxiety of the spirit"
(2.22)	רעיון הלב	"purpose (of his heart)"
(6.9)	רעיון הנפש	"anxiety of the soul"
T	חבירות רוחא	"breaking of the spirit"
V	afflictio spiritus,	"vexation of the spirit"
" (2.11)	" animi,	" " " mind"
" (2.26)	cassa sollicitudo mentis,	"fruitless anxiety of the mind"

- V (4.6) afflictio animi, "vexation of the mind"
 " (6.9) praesumptio spiritus, "presumption of the spirit"

Although the variations of the translation of רוח do not reflect a problem with that word the different renderings of רעות or רעיון do. Both forms are regarded as having the same meaning but there is little unanimity even within a version itself. The LXX consistently produces $\kappa\rho\alpha\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ $\kappa\nu\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ which in itself is difficult to translate - possibly, 'the plan of the spirit' or 'the choice of the spirit'. We cannot be sure how the LXX translator saw the Hebrew רעות or רעיון ; however it seems likely that he took the words as from the root רעה III 'to take pleasure in, desire' or as Aramaic words from the root רעא with the same meaning.

Symmachus $\nu\omicron\mu\eta\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\acute{\epsilon}\mu\omicron\upsilon$ 'feeding on wine', similar in meaning to his $\beta\acute{o}\sigma\chi\eta\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\acute{\epsilon}\mu\omicron\upsilon$ of 1.14 where Aquila has $\nu\omicron\mu\eta\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\acute{\epsilon}\mu\omicron\upsilon$, seems to have taken our word רעות (רעיון) from the root רעה 'to feed upon'. The idea would be that of fruitless effort and is quite parallel to הגל . Symmachus may have been influenced in his rendering by familiarity with the phrase in Hosea 12.2 אפרים רעה רוח ורדף קרים where רעה is linked with רוח and where the idea is that of activity which does not produce results. Symmachus, however, is not consistent in his rendering of this phrase and

so betrays a degree of uncertainty, e.g. in 4.6 he has
 κακώσεως πνεύματος 'oppression of the spirit' (also 6.9)
 which brings us to our third variation.

The latter expression of Symmachus suggests that in both
 4.6 and 6.9 he has taken רעית as from רעע 'to shake, break',
 an Aramaic loan word and parallel to the Hebrew רצת . T
 seems to have interpreted in this way also (Aramaic תנר
 being parallel to Hebrew שבר 'break'). P ܐܢܝܢܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ
 'anxiety of spirit' is from the root ܐܢܝܢܐ 'to smite, shake'.
 This root in the Ethpaal is used with ܐܢܝܢܐ or ܐܢܝܢܐ in the
 phrase 'his spirit was agitated'.¹²⁴ Whether or not the Syriac
 translator took רעית from רעע is difficult to say but this
 seems the most likely explanation. However he is not consistent
 in his treatment of the word for in 2.22 we get ܐܢܝܢܐ (for
 רעית) a word meaning 'will' from the root ܐܢܝܢܐ 'to be
 willing' and which suggests that here the translator took
 רעית to be from the root רעע III or from the Aramaic
 רעע as we supposed LXX did. This would indicate uncertainty
 in the mind of the Peshitta translator too.

The Vulgate's 'vexation of the spirit' is on the same
 lines as the prevailing P translation. The translator varies
 a little in his rendering of the phrase, e.g. 'afflictio animi'
 (2.11; 4.6) and in 2.26 where we have perhaps his main under-
 standing of the phrase, e.g. 'cassa sollicitudo mentis',

'fruitless anxiety of the mind'; but in 6.9 the translation is 'praesumptio spiritus', 'presumption of spirit' which may indicate that he too was unsure of the word.

Rashi takes רעור as being from רעע. Commenting on 1.14 he cites the phrase and gives its meaning שנוי לרה quoting Is. 8.9 where the root רעע is used. He explains - 'every work ends in pain of heart'. Ibn Ezra (on 1.14) compares the phrase with the Hosea passage pointing out that the activity described there 'does not profit or satisfy'. He goes on, however, to suggest that the meaning of ריה may be ריה here, and that the phrase may mean 'empty thought'.¹²⁵ This again signifies uncertainty in Ibn Ezra's mind. Rashbam holds to the view that רעור and רעור come from רעה 'to desire'. He defines the terms with the word רצון 'desire'. He goes on to define ריה with the French word 'talent' which means 'inclination' or 'desire'; but he does not indicate how the phrase takes its place in the contexts in which it appears. Luther 'afflictio spiritus',¹²⁶ merely follows the Vulgate.

To-day, while scholars are still undecided as to the exact meaning of this phrase¹²⁷, we feel that we can at least reduce the possibilities a little.

The words רעה and רעור occur in Biblical Aramaic with the meaning 'desire' (רעה) Ezra 5.17; 7.18, and

'thought' (רעיון) Dan. 2.29f; 4.16; 5.6, 10; 7.28; here they must derive from the Aramaic root רעך . It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the words in question are similarly derived, i.e. from the Hebrew רעה III. This automatically rules out the interpretation 'vexation of spirit' etc. which is based on the root רעע . This latter rendering is also to be discouraged on the question of רוח - spirit. We feel that the Hosea passage, no doubt a familiar text to Koheleth, is important in our considerations; there, רוח , being parallel to קרים has the meaning 'wind' not 'spirit'.

In Hosea 12.2 the translation may be 'Ephraim feeds on wind and pursues the East wind' (AV), or 'Ephraim herds the wind' (RSV, cf. NEB). Now the Koheleth construction may have the sense 'feeding on wind' or 'herding the wind', and either would give a good parallel to הוּל . But in the light of the occurrences of both words in Biblical Aramaic we feel that this is not Koheleth's meaning. The sense 'feed on' gave rise eventually to 'delight in' and even 'strive after'¹²⁸, (McNeille p57, KB) and it is probable that this is the required meaning. In support of this we might note that in Prov. 15.14 the root רעה is parallel to בקש , and that in Modern Hebrew both words carry the meaning 'to strive'. The phrase is probably to be rendered 'striving after wind'.

CHAPTER 2 VERSE 3

MT: תרתי בלבי למשון ביין את בשרי ולבי בהג בחכמה ולאחז בסכלות
עד אשר אראא אי נה טוב לבבי האדם אשר יעשו תחת השמים
מספר ימי חייהם

LXX: καὶ κατεσκεψάμην· εἰ ἡ καρδία μου ἐλκύσει ὡς οἶνον τὴν σάρκα
μου· καὶ καρδία μου ὠδήγησεν ἐν σοφίᾳ καὶ τοῦ κρατῆσαι ἐπ'
εὐφροσύνῃ, ἕως οὗ ἴδω κοῖον τὸ ἄγαθὸν τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν
ἀνθρώπων ὃ ποιήσουσιν ὑπὸ τὸν ἥλιον ἀριθμὸν ἡμερῶν ζωῆς
αὐτῶν

P: כִּי־יַיִן , יִשְׁכַּר אֶת־בְּשָׁרִי וְלִבִּי בְּחָכְמָה
וְלֹא־אֶחָד בְּשָׂטוֹת עוֹלִימָיָא עַד דִּי בְּחַבְיִית וְחִזִּית אִידִין מִבְּהוֹן מִבְּ לִבִּי
אֲנִשָּׁא דִּיעֲבֹדוֹן עַד דִּאִיבֹרֵן קִימִין בַּעֲלָמָא הֲדִין תַּחַת שְׁמִיָּא מִבִּין
יּוֹמֵי חַיֵּיהוֹן

V: cogitavi in corde meo abstrahere a vino carnem meam ut
animum meum transferrem ad sapientiam devitaremque stultitiam
donec viderem quid esset utile filiis hominum quod facto
opus est sub sole numero dierum vitae suae

T: אללית בלבי לבגדא בבית משתיא דחמרא ית בסרי ולבי דבר בחוכמתא
ולאחדא בשטות עולימיא עד די בחבית וחזית אידין מבהון מב לבבי
אנשא דיעבדון עד דאיבון קיימין בעלמא הדין תחות שמיא מבין
יומי חייהון

In the section 2.1-11 Koheleth tells us of his experiment with 'pleasure'. The pursuit of wisdom had proved fruitless (1.12-18), and so in order to find out if there is any profit in life he turns to self-indulgence. The same result obtains. (cf. 2.11 וְהָנָה הַכֹּל הַבֹּל וְרַעוּתָא and 1.14 וְאִין יִתְרוֹן חֲתָה הַשְּׂמֵשׁ). The passage vv.1-11 describes the details of the experiment which he himself conceived (v.1); he wishes us to understand that he was thorough in all that he did, that it was a serious undertaking.

v.3 is a difficult passage. The author seems to be saying that wine was his first pleasure; that he attempted to grasp what the wise count folly, though all the time his mind was in control. All this to see if there was any lasting good that he might recommend to men to engage in.

תִּרְחִי is from תָּרַח 'to spy out, explore' and is used by Koheleth for the investigation made by the mind (1.13; 2.3; 7.25). LXX 'And I examined' captures the idea; 'Aq. and Sym. καὶ ἐνέσκηψα 'And I considered', and Theod. καὶ διένοησάμην 'And I was disposed' do not quite; neither do P nor V cogitavi 'I thought', but Targ. אֱלִילִית is the Aramaic equivalent to the Hebrew תִּרְחִי. LXX, 'Aq., Sym. and Theod. all begin the passage with the conjunction καὶ. This may be an indication of another Hebrew text וְתִרְחִי, but since neither P, T, nor V represent 'and' it would seem, especially from what follows in

LXX, that the translator of that version found difficulty in reading the Hebrew here, and that the other Greek versions have followed LXX.

LXX, however, proceeds thus '... whether my heart would draw (?) my flesh as with wine ..'. McNeile feels that "the evidence is strongly in favour of the originality of LXX. If the original Hebrew was וְתַתִּי אֲנִי בִלְבִי מִשְׁוֹךְ, it might easily be misread - אֲנִי becoming אֶם and מִשְׁוֹךְ becoming יִמְשֹׁךְ by the doubling of the previous י¹²⁹, and this is a possibility; but we feel that LXX is merely a corruption of the rendering of 'Aq., Sym. and Theod. - ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου ἑλκύσαι which support MT. (P. כלב, T בִּלְבִי and V 'in corde meo' all support MT.) McNeile's suggestion assumes the omission of ל in לִמְשֹׁךְ but this is vouched for by P and T.

לִמְשֹׁךְ בִּיּוֹן אֶת נַפְשִׁי This is a difficult phrase.

לִמְשֹׁךְ means 'to draw, drag, draw out, prolong' in Biblical Hebrew, but 'to draw my flesh with wine' is unintelligible. Delitzsch points out that the verb occurs in the Talmud - B. Hag. 14a בְּעֵלֵי אֲגוּדָה שְׂמוּשְׁכֵין לִבּוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם כְּמִים and translates, 'The Haggadists refresh men's hearts like water'.¹³⁰ Gordis, however, translates, '... attract, draw men's hearts ..',¹³¹ while Driver has '... sustaining a man's heart (understanding) like water' for this passage.¹³²

The LXX rendering, though corrupt, testifies to the verb

מִשָּׁךְ (ἐλκύσει) as do also Aq. and Theod. ἐλκύσει 'draw, drag'. P ~~לִּשְׂמֹחַ~~ 'to cause to rejoice, delight' might point to מִשָּׁל, which Jounon (p419) has suggested as an emendation, but since the root מִשָּׁךְ does not occur in Syriac, the translator may simply be dealing with a difficult text and interpreting the Hebrew according to context.¹³³ F לִּבְגֵד uses the Aramaic equivalent of מִשָּׁךְ but its paraphrase לִּבְגֵד בְּנִית does not help us greatly. It may mean 'to guide my flesh in (or into) the house of wine'. V 'abstrahere a vino carnem meam', 'to withdraw my flesh from wine' does not indicate another Hebrew text. The translator has taken מִשָּׁךְ as 'withdraw' and has interpreted accordingly. But this rendering is contrary to the spirit of the context, which suggests that the author is setting out the details of his experiment with pleasure. מִשָּׁךְ in Biblical Hebrew never means 'to withdraw', though it does have this meaning in later Hebrew (Jastrow) as has the Aramaic word בִּגְד used by the Targum. The translator of V was perhaps motivated by a desire to avoid imputing such unconventional behaviour to Solomon, and Midrash Rabbah ... my flesh in (with) the wine of the Torah', similarly motivated, misses the point of the passage and does not help us with the meaning of מִשָּׁךְ. Rashi does not spell out his understanding of the word, but his ולמשוך ולעדן במשתה היין את בשרי may

indicate that he equates it with ערן 'to refresh', while Ibn Ezra's ... while I was rejoicing' merely demonstrates that for him מנחם ביין comes into the activity of rejoicing. Rashbam defines it: להתענג ולשמוח עצמי "to indulge and enjoy myself with wine", while Luther "abstinere a vino", "to abstain from wine"¹³⁴, simply follows V.

We feel that there is no need to emend the text; that we have here a Hebrew idiom, probably misunderstood by LXX; that P interpreted according to the context; that T may have reproduced the idiom and that V, unsure of the meaning, made an erroneous attempt at interpreting, missing the whole point of the passage. Rashi may be ambiguous, but if we examine the Talmud passage cited above and compare it with ch. 2.3 then 'refresh' is the rendering most easily adopted.

למנחם and ולאחז are both governed by חרתי at the beginning of the verse. Between the two statements is a clause in parenthesis - ולבי נהג בחכמה 'though my mind behaved itself wisely'. Koheleth is careful to point out that although he indulged in wine-drinking to refresh himself¹³⁵ yet all the while his mind was in control, acting wisely. This was an experiment in the 'cool hour', not a sudden lapse in the heat of the moment.

LXX follows MT here exactly. Sym. ἵνα τὴν καρδίαν μου μεταγάγω εἰς σοφίαν 'that I might transfer my mind to wisdom' takes לָוִי as accusative and may have taken נָהַג in the sense of 'drive'. Vulgate's "ut animum meum transferem ad sapientiam" follows Sym.¹³⁶ while T supports MT.

P 'though my mind was thinking wisely and holding to prudence' has seen here two parallel statements (see below). Kamenetsky¹³⁷ feels that the P translator took נָהַג from

הָגָה, and this is possible, but not likely. To begin with the root ~~נָהַג~~ in Syriac means 'to groan', and was therefore unsuitable. Secondly, the root ~~נָהַג~~ exists in Syriac with the same sense as in Hebrew, hence if the translator had felt he was confronted with a form of הָגָה we would have expected some form of the Syriac root ~~נָהַג~~ for his rendering. It is more likely that the translator, having used the root ~~נָהַג~~ for תִּרְתִּי employed it again for נָהַג because of the problem he had with that word.

וּלְאַחֵז בְּסִכְלוֹת 'and to lay hold of folly'. This phrase is part of the predicate of תִּרְתִּי (לְמַשׁוֹךְ and לְאַחֵז are parallel). This sequence was interrupted by the previous phrase in parenthesis. Koheleth has decided to indulge in wine drinking and to experience what the wise call 'folly'.

LXX 'and to lay hold of merriment' testifies to

ולאחז in MT, though not to בסכלות . If, however, LXX
 read ולאחז we would expect another infinitive to precede
 this one, i.e. we would expect למשוך or משוך to have
 occurred rather than אט ימשך.¹³⁸ If LXX read בסכלות
 we would expect ἐκ' ἀποσοῦν hence it would appear that the
 problem lies in the Greek text itself, viz. the mistake of a
 copyist who, consciously or otherwise was influenced by the
 reference to wine earlier in the verse. The Peshitta has
~~ܠܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܡܝܢ~~ 'and laying hold of understanding'.
 That this suggests an underlying Hebrew text בסכלות is
 unlikely. We have already discussed the problem which the
 version had with this word in 1.17. It is interesting that
 the root סכל can mean 'to be confused' as well as 'to be
 foolish', and in Aramaic 'to be sensible'. In Syriac the root
 in the Pael has the two meanings - 'explain' and 'make foolish'.
 In confusion the Syriac translator has taken this phrase as
 parallel to the previous one viz. ~~ܠܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܡܝܢ~~
 Having decided that בסכלות must be parallel to בחכמה, he
 took ולאחז as ואחז . There is no need to suppose that
 another Hebrew text, reading ואחז underlies the P rendering
 here, as Kamenetsky supposes.¹³⁹ ~~אחז~~ though a passive
 participle is, according to Payne Smith¹⁴⁰, frequently used in
 place of the present participle. We should note that while
 the P translator may have been confused as to סכלות it is

possible that his choice of word was influenced by his desire to avoid attributing to Solomon, whom he believed to be the author, the activity of 'grasping folly'. T follows MT 'and to lay hold of the folly of youth', though modifies the experience of the author by limiting the folly in which he engaged. V, having taken the previous phrase 'that I might turn my mind to wisdom', and continuing 'and avoid folly', seems to have disregarded the Hebrew ולאחז altogether and interpreted the phrase as an extension of the previous one. But while V supports MT סכלות = 'folly' it is likely that the entire V rendering is coloured by the wish to avoid the pejorative reference to Solomon.

Midrash Rabbah, having introduced the Torah into the first two clauses of the verse, continues, ' ולאחז בסכלות . R. Yudan asked in the name of R. Aha, "What is (the meaning of) this phrase?" He said to him, "to grasp understanding (בסכלותם)" 'It may be, therefore, that Peshitta's rendering is not due to confusion but to the interpretative principle involved in this Midrash.¹⁴¹

Luther translates 'et comprehendere prudentiam' though he comments that the Hebrew word can mean either 'wisdom' or 'folly'.¹⁴² The sense, he says, may be 'to understand folly', i.e. with a view to advising others as to how to avoid evil. This may be the reasoning behind the V rendering 'devitareque


stultitiam'.

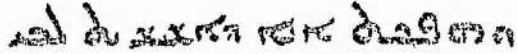
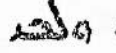



The NEB translation, '... my mind was guided by wisdom, not blinded by folly' is dependent upon an emendation of the text.¹⁴³ The translators assume that a א dropped out of the consonantal text and that the original was וְלֹא אָחֵז בְּסִכְלוֹת . This produces a phrase parallel in meaning to the previous one, viz. וְלֹא אָחֵז בְּחִכְמָה and gives good sense (cf. P above) and is at the same time ingenious. But בְּחִכְמָה cannot have the passive meaning, and if we read it with an active meaning the Hebrew is not as acceptable. It would be easier to accept the reverse process, viz. that a Hebrew text וְלֹא אָחֵז בְּסִכְלוֹת was modified over the years to וְלֹא אָחֵז בְּחִכְמָה in order to take the edge off the continual unconventional behaviour of Koheleth.

Indulgence in wine drinking would be included in the wise man's understanding of סִכְלוֹת hence וְלֹא אָחֵז בְּסִכְלוֹת is a parallel to לְמַשְׁךְ בִּיַּיִן בְּשָׂרִי Koheleth may have studied 'folly' (1.17); now he will experience an aspect of it!

תַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם This phrase occurs in Koheleth in 1.13 and here. It has the same meaning for the author as the more frequently employed תַּחַת הַשָּׁמַשׁ - 'on earth'. LXX, P and V might suggest a Hebrew text reading תַּחַת הַשָּׁמַשׁ but since T תַּחַת שְׁמַיָּא supports MT we feel with Gordis¹⁴⁴ that the 'difcilior lectio' is to be preferred and that the Versions

represent the desire to have uniform phraseology.

 מספר ימי חייהם 'during the few days of their life'.
While the word מספר means 'number' it can also carry the idea of limited number, i.e. a few, cf. Deut. 33.6 ויהי מחיר מספר 'let his men be few. (cf. also Gen. 34.30; Deut. 4.27.) This is the sense in this passage. NEB '... the brief span of his life'. LXX has represented the Hebrew word for word, but the Greek cannot be translated with the required nuance; neither can V nor T, though P  probably can.¹⁴⁵ Luther, 'per omnem vitam'¹⁴⁶ too does not catch the sense of the passage either.

 In Codex Ambrosianus the phrase  'And I turned to quieten my mind' appears at the beginning of v.3 while in Lee's edition it comes between  and . Two other witnesses¹⁴⁷ omit the entire phrase, but these two witnesses have this same reading at v.20 in place of   which is the reading there of A and L. Since the phrase is out of place in v.3 and since no other Version represents it, it is reasonable to conclude that its appearance in this verse does not suggest another Hebrew text behind the Version. The fact that A and L place it in different positions points to the fact that it may have existed independently of v.3 at one stage. The fact that the same phrase occurs in v.20 in the other witnesses leads us to

examine the alternative reading of that verse in A and L, viz.

~~ל~~ ~~אנני~~ ~~ל~~ ~~אנני~~ ~~ל~~ ~~אנני~~ The MT here is וטבנתי ליאש את לבי

'And I turned to give myself up to despair' but the Versions

had difficulty with ליאש . - LXX τοῦ ἀποτάξασθαι

'to exclude ..', V '.. renuntiavitque cor meum ..' 'and my

heart renounced ..', P (AL), ~~ל~~ ~~אנני~~ ~~ל~~ ~~אנני~~ ~~ל~~ ~~אנני~~ '.. to cut off (my

mind)' and T לאש 'to relax (my mind)'. It is likely,

therefore, that the superfluous phrase of v.3 is an alternative

reading of v.20 which was written in the margin of a manu-

script.¹⁴⁸ Some copyist chose the marginal reading as the

most suitable, giving rise to the aforementioned witnesses,

while another inserted it in v.3. In the case of A a

marginal reading of this length would probably extend from v.20

to v.3 (between the columns), and the similarity of ~~אנני~~

to ~~אנני~~ would add to the uncertainty already present in

the mind of the copyist.

CHAPTER 2 VERSE 12

MT: ופניתי אני לראות חכמה והוללות וסכלות כי מה האדם שיבוא
אחרי המלך את אשר כבר עשהו

LXX: καὶ ἐπέβλεψα ἐγὼ τοῦ ἰδεῖν σοφίαν καὶ παραφορὰν καὶ
ἄφροσύνην ὅτι τίς ἄνθρωπος ὃς ἐπελεύσεται ὀπίσω τῆς βουλῆς;
τὰ ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτήν

ר: כח אלוהים רב כח אלוהים רב
לשם אלוהים רב לשם אלוהים רב
לשם אלוהים רב לשם אלוהים רב

V: transivi ad contemplandam sapientiam erroresque et
stultitiam quid est inquam homo ut sequi possit regem
factorem suum

T: ואסתכלית אבא למחזי חוכמתא וחלחולתא ומלכותא וסוכלתא ארום
מה הבאה אית לגבר לצלאה בתר גזירת מלכא ובתר פורענותא דהא
כבר אתגזרת עלוהי ואתעבדות ליה

Vv. 1-11 constitute a unit within a larger section, viz. 1.12-2.26; it deals with the author, in the role of Solomon, describing an experiment with life. He had indulged in the gratification of his desires, had all that money could buy, and concludes (v.11) that the whole enterprise yielded nothing of a satisfactory nature.

V.12 begins another unit dealing mainly with the long term value of wisdom as opposed to folly. Although there is an apparent advantage of wisdom over folly, the end is the same (vv.12-16). In this section it is obvious that a comparison is being made between wisdom on the one hand and folly on the other, hence the somewhat ambiguous beginning to the verse should be interpreted in this light.¹⁴⁹ וּפְנִיתִי
occurs in v.11 also but nowhere else in the book. In v.11 the author reflects upon his achievements, and the construction used is /פָּנָה ב' 'to turn to observe' (cf. Job 6.28); here the verb occurs with the preposition ל', and has the idea of turning, in the sense of turning one's attention to something. The author picks up the construction of v.11, alters it slightly and thereby conveys that he is changing the subject; that is to say, having concluded that his achievements were futility itself he is now turning to something different. /לִרְאוֹת חִכְמָה
'to see wisdom etc.' (cf. 1.16 where רָאָה is used with

(חִכְמָה) The sense is 'to consider, to examine' - 'I

turned my attention to examine wisdom, madness and folly ...'

LXX καὶ ἐκέλευσα , P. ^{אני}אני and T ופניתי
 have all been influenced by the meaning in v.11 - /נפניתי
 'I considered'. Vulgate 'transivi' recognises the difference
 between the term in v.11 and that in v.12 (v.11 - 'cumque me
 convertissem', 'and when I turned myself') and has obtained the
 correct sense here. Again, the Vulgate's 'ad contemplandam'
 for ופניתי is superior to the literal renderings of the
 other Versions. Rashi follows the Vulgate's interpretation -
 ופניתי 'I turned from all worldly
 affairs to consider ...', while Ibn Ezra takes ופניתי as
 /התעסקתי 'I engaged in ...'

Under 1.17 we have already discussed the problem connected
 with the understanding of הוללות and סכלות 'madness and
 folly'. LXX understands these words correctly here (cf. 1.17);
 P 'transgression and understanding' misinterprets both words.
 The Syriac translator seems to have had difficulty with הוללות
 throughout the book (cf. 10.13; 7.25; 9.3), though occasionally
 his rendering of סכלות reveals that he understood the mean-
 ing of that word. (cf. on 1.17) V always translates הוללות
 'errors' and T 'the intrigues of the kingdom', and these are
 their renderings here, hence we feel certain that MT underlies
 all the versions.¹⁵⁰

We have already noted that the idea in this section is a comparison between wisdom and folly, hence the meaning of the clause is - 'I turned my attention to compare wisdom with madness and folly'.¹⁵¹ 'Siegfried wants to read חכמה וטפלות and so obtain the phrase of 1.17¹⁵², but there is no support for this reading; it arises merely from a desire to have a uniform phraseology.

Gordis¹⁵³ translates the clause in the same way as 1.17, - 'Once again I saw that wisdom is but madness and folly ..' but we feel that this is an unlikely rendering; v.13 does not follow upon this interpretation of the clause whereas if we translate with Galling, for example, v.13 follows naturally.

From the translation of LXX onwards the second half of v.12 has been fraught with problems. Quite apart from the difficult Hebrew of the passage, there are contextual difficulties. For the moment we shall leave the question of the correct locus of v.12b: as it stands it follows v.12a and this position is vouched for by all the versions.

LXX has ὅτι τίς ἄνθρωπος. McNeile¹⁵⁴ feels that this presupposes the Hebrew כי מי אדם but this does not follow. It is true that כִּי מִי is ambiguous; it could translate either מי or מה (although מה is usually 'what' and מי usually 'who', we note in 2.19 that the Syriac ܡܝ must have the meaning 'who') but V 'what is man,

said I ...', T 'what advantage has a man', and Sym. τί δὲ

ὁ ἄνθρωπος support MT. To come back to LXX, McNeille records¹⁵⁵ that MSS 147-157-159 have τίς ὁ ἄνθρωπος which does represent the definite article, while τίς (for τί) might be explained as being more appropriate than the neuter τί to the masculine noun ἄνθρωπος. But the difficulty of the entire passage may well account for the variation.

For MT אַחֲרֵי הַדִּבְרִים LXX has ὀπίσω τῆς βουλῆς 'after the counsel' or 'after the decree'. There is the possibility that τῆς βουλῆς is a copyist's error for τοῦ βασιλέως but in the light of what follows we feel this to be unlikely. To begin with Sym. has ἵνα παρακολουθήσῃ βουλῇ a rendering which is related to LXX. According to Swete Sym. used Aq. and Theod. freely in his version¹⁵⁶, but both these versions have ὀπίσω τοῦ βασιλέως; hence Sym. seems to have been the recipient of a traditional understanding of the text - one which is represented by LXX. It follows that the confusion as to אַחֲרֵי is already present at this stage.

LXX (B) continues τὰ ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτήν 'as far as he does it' which does not make sense. LXX κ^ω σὺν τὰ ὅσα and Theod. σὺν τὰ ὅσα might indicate that πκ was in the text used by the translator (πκ = σύν) but כּבּ is

omitted and עמרו seems to have been read for עמורו .

Ibn Ezra refers to the confusion on מלך . He mentions a currently held view that המלך comes from the root מלך as in וימלך לפני עלי 'And I considered carefully' (Neh. 5.7). This passage in Nehemiah is the only occurrence of this root in Biblical Hebrew though it does occur in late Hebrew. It would seem to be an Aramaic loan word מלך 'to counsel'. (cf. Dan. 4.24) Ibn Ezra cites the translation which emanates from such a view שיבא אחרי הצצה 'who comes after the counsel' which seems to be LXX, although he does not explicitly say so. Grætz¹⁵⁷ and McNeile¹⁵⁸ and others also claim this root to be at the basis of LXX. In fact unless

τῆς βουλῆς is a mis-spelling of τοῦ βασιλέως (unlikely) or a freak, it can only be accounted for in this way.

Gordis¹⁵⁹ states that P has understood המלך in the same way, but we feel that this is not the case. It is likely that the LXX rendering has influenced the thinking of Gordis here. To begin with the rendering of נגא by ܢܐ is unusual in the Peshitta of Koheleth. (cf. 1.4; 2.16; 5.2,15; 11.8 where ܢܐܝܐ is used¹⁶⁰) The only other occurrence is 11.9 where the Hiph'il of נגא is translated by the Aph'ael of ܢܐ . However, it should be noted that the phrase ܢܐܝܐ occurs in both these passages. In 11.9 the idea is 'bringing into judgement', hence the Syriac of 2.12 should probably be

translated 'will enter into judgement after the king', and the thrust of the passage in P is 'what sort of man will enter into judgement after the king, i.e. after the king has judged'.¹⁶¹ P goes on 'then with his maker', apparently taking the final word in the verse as עֲשֵׂהוּ . אֵת is probably represented by עֲשֵׂהוּ but אֵת כֹּהֵן is omitted. The translator here contrasts the futility of a man's opinion after a king has made up his mind upon a matter, with the utter futility of that opinion being held after God has decided upon it - a case of the interpretative principle קֵל וְחֹמֶר being in operation.

To some extent this meaning is expressed in the Targum's paraphrase - "What use is it for a man to pray after the decree of the king, and after punishment; behold it has already been decided concerning him, and done to him." While the Targumist has not taken עֲשֵׂהוּ as 'his maker', the idea of the power of the king's decree or decision over against a man's plea is certainly to the fore. In fact, although LXX has only one reference to this idea of 'decree', the three versions are related in their understanding of the passage.

The Vulgate - "what is man, said I, that he can follow the king his maker?" is a free translation. The translator, faced perhaps with MT, LXX and P, made a fresh attempt at obtaining sense. He follows P in taking עֲשֵׂהוּ as עֲשֵׂהוּ , and sees אֵת כֹּהֵן in apposition to it. The phrase אֵת כֹּהֵן

is unaccounted for. There is no element here of the decree or decision of God being compared with that of man; there is simply the allusion to the impossibility of man following his maker, whatever that may mean. Jerome casts his translation in the form of a parenthesis (note the insertion of 'inquam', and the absence of כִּי i.e. 'enim'). This aside of Koheleth's is equivalent to saying - 'just as no man can follow the king, his maker, I, Solomon, could not add to my materialistic achievements' - thereby giving the reason for his change to wisdom etc.. It may well be that the Vulgate's rendering was influenced by the treatment of the verse in Midrash Rabbah. There we read - 'If a man tells you "I can stand upon the foundation of the world" answer him, "You are unable to understand a human king; how then can you comprehend the Supreme king of kings, the Holy One, Blessed is He."' Again we read, 'When their Creator praises them (i.e. the heavens) who would dare to defame them!' Hence we conclude that P, V and Midrash Rabbah are related here.

Rashi cites part of 12b, viz. כִּי . . . המלך, and continues להתחנן לו על גזרה שגזר עליך - '... to supplicate to him regarding the legal decision which he has made about him.' Rashi is following the tradition found in LXX, P and Targum. He continues - וכבוד עשאוהו למעשה גזירה לגזרה - '... but already it has been done as a decreed work of a decreer.'

Ibn Ezra, however, is more scientific in his treatment of 12b, and is more explicit in his comments. He sees a connection between the **מה האדם** and the **מה אנו** of Psalm 8, and claims that 'the meaning here is - **כי מה יכולנו**

מהיה באדם שיבוא אחרי המלך 'For what power shall there be in man ...'. He continues - **וכל מה שיעשה כבר עשוהו**

אחרים - 'and everything he shall do, others have done it already.' He admits that he has had to supply the subject of the plural **עשוהו**, but in order to support this move he cites two examples in the Old Testament where the subject of a verb is not mentioned and requires to be supplied (Gen. 48.1; Num. 26.59). Although it is not easy to agree with Ibn Ezra on the translation of MT, it must be admitted that his interpretation is in line with the context; this cannot be said for those who went before him. In his view of the passage, v.12 is saying, 'I turned to wisdom etc. because as far as possessions are concerned I had accomplished the ultimate - there was nothing to add to my achievements.' Rashbam reverts to the interpretation offered by Rashi.

Luther¹⁶³ - 'quis enim homo potest imitari regem, qui eum ante fecit' - 'for what man can imitate the king who has previously made him?' follows V's interpretation of the latter part of the verse: 'king' is taken to refer to God. In the first half of 12b he merely offers an interpretation of V

'ut sequi possit regem'; for him 'to follow after' means 'to imitate'.

The AV "... for what can the man do that cometh after the king? even that which hath already been done" has relied to some extent upon Ibn Ezra's insight here, as have many translations and commentators since. 'The experiment made by Koheleth is final, for surely no one can make a more complete test of pleasure, wealth and riotous living than a king ...',¹⁶⁴

Ibn Ezra has taken מה האדם as though it were 'כי מה האדם כעבין ה' / מה אדם וחדעמו (Ps. 144.3) (cf. מה אדם (Ps. 8.5)) but many who follow his general understanding of the verse see 12b as referring to the king's successor, i.e. a particular man.¹⁶⁵ This does not greatly affect the sense assigned to it by the medieval commentator.

This is not to say that scholars were in general agreement with the main line of Ibn Ezra's argument. It is probably true to say that none of them was content with the latter's interpretation. In 1898 Siegfried tried to help matters by transposition; he suggested that 12b should come after v.11.¹⁶⁶ But while this gave a more even flow in the reading of v.12a-13f. it did not elucidate the problem of 12b, since it did not follow naturally upon v.11. Scott, who brackets 12b, also suggests that it may follow v.11.¹⁶⁷

However, this experiment of Siegfried's coupled with

the interpretation of 12b as referring to the royal successor, led to further speculation. We have argued above that v.12 begins a section which has to do with a comparison of wisdom and folly. The sentence 12b interrupts the argument here.

As H.L. Ginsberg points out - '12a, 13-17 make a perfect coherent paragraph, ruined by 12b.'¹⁶⁸ We note further the

similarity of the opening clause of v.12b to the phrase in

v.18 לָאִישׁ שִׁיחִיָּה אַחֲרָי 'to the man who shall succeed me'.

This must be the idea in 12b also. (i.e. 'For what is the man (like) who shall succeed the king?' That is to say the

phrases are so close textually and grammatically that it would be wrong to give them altogether different meanings. But

their proximity is suggestive; nowhere else in Koheleth do we have a similar phrase. Do they belong together? 'Un problem

reste pose, celui de la place et du sens de 2.12b. Nous pensons qu'il est plus simple de traduire ce stique tel qu'il se presente, mais de le lire dans un autre contexte, entre les versets 18 et 19.'¹⁶⁹ In 1950 Ginsberg had suggested placing

12b between v.17 and v.18¹⁷⁰, but with other emendations (see below). Barucq, whose transposition is followed by NEB, is

disagreeing with Ginsberg here, taking up a tentative suggestion of Zimmerli.¹⁷¹ We feel that Barucq's suggestion as to the

context of 12b is better than Ginsberg's in that it is a more natural position for the sentence. Placed between vv.18 and

19, the first clause of 12b is more easily interpreted, and we can see that the misplacement of it led to the bewilderment of the versions and commentators.

But although we may have found the original location of 12b, the final clause את אשר כבר עשוהו remains problematical.

אֵת, the sign of the definite accusative, presupposes a transitive verb and there is none in the second half of the verse. עשה is transitive but it already has the accusative verbal suffix attached. If אֵת is taken as the preposition 'with' the situation becomes even more complex.

Graetz¹⁷² made the tentative suggestion of reading אַחֲרַי for אַחֲרֵי (and of reading הַמֶּלֶךְ 'to advise'); Ginsberg, who has already transposed 12b after v.17, follows the vocalisation אַחֲרֵי (cf. v.18 where the phrase recurs)¹⁷³, but takes a different line with הַמֶּלֶךְ.¹⁷⁴ It is Ginsberg's thesis that when the author is represented as a מֶלֶךְ the Hebrew has been wrongly vocalised, and that the word refers to the vocation of the author, viz. 'a property holder' הַמֶּלֶךְ¹⁷⁵ (cf. SK, pp.12-15). This theory is based on his exegesis of 12b where he makes the alteration הַמֶּלֶךְ and translates 'who will reign over'. While we would disagree with Ginsberg's general arguments on מֶלֶךְ in Koheleth, it must be admitted that his suggestion on 12b is enlightening: - 'of what sort will be the man who comes after me, who will reign over that

which has already been achieved?' The problem of the transitive verb is solved, and we can see that the misunderstanding arose in the Hebrew because the sentence was out of context. Following v.18 המלך would have had less chance of being vocalised המלך. This reconstruction is followed substantially by NEB - 'What sort of a man will he be who will succeed me, who inherits what others have acquired?'

עשוהו remains a problem. NEB follows Ibn Ezra's supplied אחרים while Ginsberg has taken it as a passive¹⁷⁶, though he is prepared to emend either to עשוהו ידי (cf. v.11a) or עשיחי.¹⁷⁷

ΙΧΧ: τὸ γινόμενον ἤδη ἐστίν, καὶ ὅσα τοῦ γίνεσθαι ἤδη γέγονεν,
καὶ ὁ θεὸς ζητήσῃ τὸν διωκόμενον

[illegible]

v. quod factum est ipsum permanet quae futura sunt iam fuerunt et Deus instaurat quod abiit

מה דהות מן קדמת דבא הא כבר הוא דאתי ומה דעתיד למהוי בסוף יומיא ז'
הא כבר הוה וליום דיבא רבא דעתיד יי למתבע חשוכא ומסכיבא מן
ידוהי דרשיציא דרדיף ליה

Chapter 3 focuses attention on the activity of God, who has organised the world and events according to his own pleasure but has not permitted man to know the sequence of these events or what is in store for him; nor can man find out the ways of God. Man should, therefore, in the face of this lamentable state of affairs enjoy what he can of life. Vv.14f. discuss the fact that nothing can either be added to or taken from the work of God. Koheleth virtually repeats what he has already said in 1.9 about events repeating themselves, and then adds by way of explanation that the basic fact behind this observation is that God himself reproduces the past. This final clause is the most interesting and has long been a source of difficulty. והאלהים יבקש את בוניו

To begin with we would normally expect the definite article or suffix with בוניו following את, However, the omission occurs also at 7.7, viz. את לב, and the erratic use of the article is a characteristic of the Hebrew of Koheleth.¹⁷⁸ It is true that in Koh 3.15 LXX and Aq. have

τὸν δισυόμενον but this need not necessarily mean that either read את הבניו. Both versions may be supplying what is desiderated. We receive little help from Ben Sira 5.3 where the phrase is almost reproduced כי יי מנקש בנדפיים for while the thought is probably identical with that in Koheleth, the את is absent and there is no necessity for

the definite article. True, if we emend the text to read

אֵת הַגִּבּוֹרִים ¹⁷⁹ the grammatical problem disappears but as Driver points out ¹⁸⁰ the reason for the omission of the article remains unexplained. Apart from emending the text with Galling no satisfactory explanation has ever appeared. It may be that Ben Sira read a text which was similar to MT and was forced to emend it himself in quotation.

However, if we accept MT, difficulties remain, viz. the meaning of גִּבּוֹרִים, of מִבְּקֵשׁ and the connection of this clause with the rest of the verse and context.


The Ben Sira passage, viz. 5.3 is generally regarded as a quotation from Koheleth though the phrase is not exactly reproduced. Since Ben Sira was written c.200 B.C. this is the first 'reference' to the passage in Koheleth. We should, therefore, turn our attention to that passage. The full verse in Ben Sira is

אֵל תֹּאמַר מִי יִגְבֹּל כְּחֹר כִּי יִי מִבְּקֵשׁ בְּרָדָפִים

LXX and P seem to have had a text reading כְּחֹר and this may be the original reading, but the meaning of the entire verse is obscure whatever reading is preferred. - 'Do not say, who

shall prevail over me? For God seeks בְּרָדָפִים ' The LXX

... ὁ γὰρ κύριος ἐκδικῶν ἐκδικήσεται σου τὴν ὕβριν.

... for the Lord of avengers will seek your shame.', P. 

~~אֵל תֹּאמַר מִי יִגְבֹּל כְּחֹר כִּי יִי מִבְּקֵשׁ בְּרָדָפִים~~ ... because the Lord is

an avenger of all the oppressed.' and V '... Deus enim vindicans

vindicabit '., for God will surely take revenge' - have all taken מִדְּפִיִּם to mean either 'persecuted' or 'pursued' and in conjunction with מָלַךְ have interpreted the passage as God taking revenge. The idea in the verse is, therefore, contained in the advice not to boast of one's power over others, since God looks after (or avenges) the persecuted.

If this is the meaning of the phrase in Ben Sira, we must ask whether this meaning will fit into the context of Koh. 3.15. We find that it does not. There are, therefore, two possibilities for us: either the phrase is misplaced or Ben Sira misunderstood its meaning. Graetz¹⁸¹ follows the former and suggests that the phrase should possibly follow v.17, but in that position it is superfluous. In fact there does not seem to be any part of Koheleth which could accom^modate the phrase with the meaning given to it by Ben Sira. Is it possible, then, that the latter has misinterpreted the phrase?

The primary meaning of the root רָדַף is 'to pursue' with the derived meaning 'to persecute'. The Niphal, which is the form we have here, may mean 'pursued' or 'persecuted'. In the Old Testament the only other occurrence of the Niphal is Lam. 5.5. נִדְּפָנוּ - where the meaning may well be 'we were pursued', but again, this does not help us in the Koheleth passage.

The LXX of the phrase in Koh. 3.15 (followed by Aq.) 'and God will seek the pursued', seems to have taken קָדַשׁ אֱלֹהִים as masc. - as a collective noun meaning 'those who are pursued (or persecuted)'. That 'LXX may have meant 'persecuted' rather than 'pursued' is suggested by the Sh rendering קָדַשׁ אֱלֹהִים 'persecuted'. Sym. ὁ δὲ θεὸς ἐπιζητήσει ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐκδιωκόμενον 'God demands an account on behalf of the persecuted' follows the LXX understanding of the word, but attributes to קָדַשׁ a meaning we might give to נָאֵל. The Targum in fact uses this verb, viz. נָאֵל to translate קָדַשׁ - '... And on the great day of judgment, the Lord will demand the poor and the needy from the hands of the wicked who pursued (or persecuted) him.' - again קָדַשׁ is taken as masc. referring to the poor and needy. Again, P וְיִשְׁכַּח אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַנֶּאֱדָרִים וְאֶת־הַנְּעִימִים 'And God seeks the pursued who is persecuted' follows the same line of exegesis but with an explanatory gloss¹⁸² וְיִשְׁכַּח אֱלֹהִים or an expansion to obviate ambiguity.

The one thing common to all these renderings is that they isolate 15b from the context and attribute to it a meaning which cannot be reconciled with either what comes before or what comes after. To assign the clause with this meaning to the work of 'the pious glossator',¹⁸³ is to take the easy way out. There is no reason whatsoever for a glossator, however pious, to insert this clause at this point.

This kind of exegesis reminds us of the Midrashim where it is commonplace to isolate a verse or even a word and to interpret with a complete disregard for context. In fact *Keheleth Rabbah* at 3.15, having reproduced the clause, says, 'Always (לעולם) God seeks the pursued ... when a righteous man pursues the righteous, when a wicked man pursues a righteous man, when a wicked man pursues a wicked man - God seeks the pursued. God demands the blood of the pursued from the pursuers'. Examples are given for this - Abel pursued by Cain, Noah by his generation, Abram by Nimrod, Isaac by the Philistines, Jacob by Esau, Joseph by his brothers, Moses by Pharaoh, David by Saul, Saul by the Philistines, Israel by the Nations. In every case God seeks the pursued. Even as far as offerings are concerned - the pursued animals are those accepted by God not the ones which pursue others.

Now this kind of exegesis is to be expected in the Midrashim; hence we feel that it is the basis for the renderings of the versions and of *Sen Sira*.

The one version which stands outside the interpretation represented by the others and the *Midrash Rabbah* is the *Vulgate*. The rendering there '... et Deus instaurat quod abiit' - '... and God repeats (or renews) what has passed away (elapsed, vanished)' has departed from the understanding of the text current in his day. What has happened is that the

translator, dissatisfied with the translations before him, sought to translate the passage in accordance with the material immediately preceding it. He has taken בָּרָח in the primary sense of 'driven away' and as a reference to events which are past. The idea in 15a is now restated except that this time God is depicted as being the author, by himself renewing what has vanished. V, therefore, has obtained the only satisfactory sense for the passage; it can now take its place with the rest of v.15.

Rashi follows the interpretation of Midrash Rabbah, citing the examples of Esau pursuing Jacob and the Egyptians pursuing Israel. He probably links this passage with the verse in Ben Sira since, in his comments, he writes שֶׁקָּבַח

מִבְּקַשׁ אֵת הַבְּרָדִים - using the Piel participle of בָּקַשׁ and the plural of בָּרָח. Rashbam follows Rashi here.

Ibn Ezra, however, interprets along the lines of the Vulgate. For him בָּרָח refers to זֶמַן 'time' and he speaks of time pursuing (רָוַח) time, and of God seeking the בָּרָח time, (i.e. the event which is passed) in order to repeat it. This is clearly a break from the traditional Jewish exegesis of the passage and may have been influenced by V's rendering. The Graecus Venetus translation of the 14th or 15th century, which according to Swete¹⁸⁴, was made by a Jew, follows this interpretation with ὁ θεὸς ζητήσει τὸ

ἀπεληλαμένον¹⁸⁵ - 'what is driven away', taking חָרַץ as neuter. Mendelssohn follows Ibn Ezra's understanding of the passage.

Luther's translation¹⁸⁶ - '... et Deus quaerit ea etiamsi impediuntur' - 'And God seeks it although hampered' is interesting. He is probably influenced by Vulgate here, understanding that God is seeking out the past, but he seems to have taken חָרַץ as חָרַץ, and חָרַץ as referring to God 'hampered'. He further comments 'man hampers and vexes the work of God'. Driver¹⁸⁷, though not referring to Luther, suggests that חָרַץ may have been an abbreviation חָרַץ = חָרַץ and that the unusual nature of the expression led to the mistake of it being regarded as the חָרַץ of the definite accusative.

חָרַץ then refers to each moment, present or future. Driver's translation 'And God claims it as it passes on', apart from needing further explanation, is not attractive.

The AV translation '... and God requireth that which is past', following the Vulgate to some extent, sets the pattern for later renderings.¹⁸⁸ Scott's 'God will see to what requires his attention'¹⁸⁹ needs some explanation, while there have been those who hold to the Ben Sira interpretation, e.g. Hengstenberg 'God seeks the persecuted',¹⁹⁰ Graetz 'Gott wird den Verfolgten suchen',¹⁹¹ and Barucq 'Et Dieu cherche le

persecuté,¹⁹² though it should be admitted that the latter two regard the clause as a gloss.

CHAPTER 4 VERSE 17

MT: שמור רגליך כאשר תלך אל בית האלהים וקרוב לשמך מזה הכסילי
 יבן כי אינם יודעים לעשות דע

LXX: φύλαξον τὸν πόδα σου ἐν ᾧ εἰς οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ
 ἐγγὺς τοῦ ἀκούειν· ὑπὲρ δόμα τῶν ἀφρόνων θυσία σου,
 ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν εἰδότες τοῦ ποιεῖν κακόν

P: כְּשֶׁתֵּלֵךְ אֶל בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים
 כְּשֶׁתֵּלֵךְ אֶל בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים
 כְּשֶׁתֵּלֵךְ אֶל בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים

V: custodi pedem tuum ingrediens domum Dei multo enim melior
 est oboedientia quam stultorum victimae qui nesciunt
 quid faciant

T: אבן בר בשא טר רגלך בעידן דתיזיל לבית מוקדשא דיי לצלאה דלא
 תהך תמן מלי חובין קדם עד לא תתוב ותהי מקריב אודגן לקבלא
 אולפן אורייתא מן כהניא וחכימיא ולא תהי כטפשיא דמקרבין
 קורבנא על חוביהון ולא תייבין מן עובדיהון בישיא דאחידין
 בידיהון וליתוהי מקבל ברעוא ארום ליתיהון ידעין למעבד בהון
 בין טב לביש

It is difficult to understand why the Masoretes grouped this verse with the section 4.13-16; the previous section properly ends with v.16, and v.17 begins a new passage. We note that the Peshitta Codex A which divides the book into six chapters, starts the third at 4.17, while we are familiar with the English versions which begin the fifth chapter with this verse, thereby placing it at the head of a series of warnings as to one's approach to God, which are, incidentally, the first in the book. The verse is difficult and has occasioned much speculation.

The Masoretes had a text which read רגליך i.e. 'your feet', but they vocalised with the vowels of the singular and so read 'your foot'. This seems to have been the reading of LXX, P, V and T, and would appear to have been the original text. Although the plural, i.e. the Kethib, makes adequate sense¹⁹³, a comparison with Proverbs 25.17 הקר

רגלך מביא רעך points also in the direction of the Qere.

McNeile draws attention to LXX ὅταν ᾖ ἡ νύξ for MT כאשר , and feels that LXX read נאשר¹⁹⁴. Since the version usually translates כאשר by καὶ ὅταν (cf. 5.3,14) it is possible that LXX did have a text which read נאשר¹⁹⁵.

The sense of the passage is 'whenever' and this is most naturally conveyed by כאשר which is MT. The other versions

capture the sense without definitely supporting either reading.

'Guard your foot whenever you enter the house of God ...' i.e.

'Be circumspect ...'.¹⁹⁶ In this passage Kheleth urges the worshipper to think of what he is doing and warns him not to behave flippantly.¹⁹⁷ בית האלהים is probably the Jerusalem

Temple since sacrifice is mentioned later in the verse;

certainly the Targumist¹⁹⁸ thought so לבית מקדשא דיי.

וקרוב לשמע ממה הכסילים זבח MT may be translated -

'And be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools', which translation takes קרוב either as an infinitive absolute used as an imperative¹⁹⁹, or as the imperative קרוב. This

continues the imperative construction with which the verse began, and which is followed in subsequent verses. LXX καὶ

ἐγγύς τοῦ ἀκούειν, ὑπὲρ δόμα τῶν ἀφρόνων θυσία σου is not

clear. קרוב has been taken as the adjective קרוב 'near', but something must be supplied - 'and (when you are) near to hear, let your sacrifice (be) better than the gift of fools'.

The translator may have read a Hebrew text - וקרוב לשמע ממה

הכסילים זבח and it could be argued that the extra כ

and כ have been lost in MT through haplography, but the chances of this occurring twice in the same clause are slight.

P and Aq. καὶ ἐγγύς ὥστε ἀκούειν both give קרוב the imperative force as do also V 'et adpropinqua ut audias ..'

and T (paraphrasing) 'And incline your ear to receive the

teaching of the Torah'. The Peshitta's continuation ~~ܐܬܝܬܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ~~ ^{ܐܬܝܬܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ} '(it is) better than fools' gifts or sacrifices' is an attempt at understanding the difficult Hebrew. The preposition ^{ܡܢ} has to be understood in MT (cf. 9.17 where again it is absent) and the Syriac has supplied it. The ~~ܐܬܝܬܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ~~ ^{ܐܬܝܬܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ}²⁰⁰ may be due to the translator's reading a Hebrew text ^{ממנו} which, as we have noted, is also a possibility with LXX. But the rest of P reflects the problems which we have in MT. The Hebrew could not have been ^{ממנו זבחי הכסילים} since LXX testifies to the word order of MT. It would seem therefore that P merely displays an attempt to resolve the difficulty inherent in the Hebrew, though on different lines from LXX.

We have already referred to the Vulgate. In fact, the version has a conflate here. 'et adpropinqua ut audias multo enim est oboedientia quam stultorum victimae ..' - 'and draw near to hear, for much better is obedience than the victims of fools ..' - ^{לשמע} being translated 'ut audias' and 'oboedientia' in turn. Jerome may have had I Sam. 15.22 in mind ^{שמע מזבח טרם} 'to obey is better than sacrifice ..' but the translation reflects the dilemma the translator was in. T 'and do not be like the fools who offer sacrifice for their sins' may be too much of a paraphrase to be a serious witness in this respect, but we do note that ^{קירבנא} is singular and

absolute, corresponding to נָחַם of MT, while the Aphel active participle מִקְרִיב is nearer to the נָחַם of MT than to מִמָּחֵם which is perhaps suggested by LXX and P.

It would seem, therefore, that as far as 17b is concerned MT is to be preferred as the original in spite of the troubles it poses. The Masoretes seem to have taken קִרְבָּנִי as an infinitive with imperative force, and to have begun a new statement with נָחַם , but here we must disagree with them. V, although preserving two translations here, is the first to suggest a solution to the problem. קִרְבָּנִי infin. abs. must be taken along with לְשָׁמַע as the subject of 17b, which in turn is compared with the offering of fools. Our translation would then be, '... and approaching to listen is better than fools offering sacrifice ...'

The medieval commentators fail to understand the sense of the passage. Rashi takes קִרְבָּנִי as inf. abs. with imper. force, and interprets: "Draw near to listen to the words of the Holy One .." Ibn Ezra and Rashbam take קִרְבָּנִי as an adjective and, perhaps because of the proximity of אֱלֹהִים , speak of God drawing near to listen to prayer. Luther²⁰¹ takes קִרְבָּנִי as imperative as does AV, JB, Padechard²⁰² and Scott²⁰³, while Mendelssohn, Delitzsch²⁰⁴ Wright²⁰⁵ Barton²⁰⁶ McNeile²⁰⁷ RSV Hertzberg²⁰⁸ and NEB take it to be the infinitive.

The final clause in the verse presents further problems. LXX supports MT completely, but this leaves us with the problem of interpretation. What is Koheleth saying here? In the previous clause he seems to be condemning the unthinking behaviour of fools who, though they bring a sacrifice, pay no attention to the words of the priest or wise man. The antecedent to אִינוֹם must therefore be the plural noun

הַכְסִילִים;²⁰⁹ it is natural that it should be said of fools that they lack knowledge אִינוֹם יוֹדְעִים .

But what we might expect here is not that fools do not know how to do evil - this is the very thing that identifies them, viz. wrong-doing - but that they do not know how to do good. Consequently it is not surprising that the LXX alone follows MT all the way. LXX 'A' has the variant reading τοῦ ποιεῖν καλόν 'to do well', but this indicates an alteration from καχόν rather than another Hebrew text. It is unlikely that P was influenced by this variant, ~~לֹא יָדְעוּ~~ ~~לַעֲשׂוֹת טוֹב~~ 'for they do not know how to do good'. If this were so we would expect ~~לֹא יָדְעוּ~~ rather than ~~לֹא יָדְעוּ~~ as Kamenetsky observes.²¹⁰ Rather, LXX 'A' and P represent independent attempts to obtain a satisfactory sense for the passage. The Vulgate's rendering 'qui nesciunt quid faciant mali' 'who do not know what evil they do' is a similar attempt without emendation, though the Hebrew will

not yield this sense. Luther, 'quia ignorant quantum mali faciant' 'because they know not how much evil they do', AV 'for they consider not that they do evil' and RSV 'for they do not know that they are doing evil' are all based on the Vulgate and reflect the difficulty in the Hebrew text. אֵינוֹם לֵיט

יִהְיוּ יֹדְעִין לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּהוֹן בֵּין טוֹב לְרָע 'because they do not know whether they are doing good or evil' is also unable to come to terms with MT, attributing to the fools the inability to distinguish between good and evil, akin to Midrash Rabbah which comments that the fools are unable to distinguish between various kinds of vows הַכִּסִּיל אֵינוֹר יִרְדֵּעַ לְהַפְרִיט בֵּין גִּזְרֵי לִנְדָר

Rashi's interpretation 'the fool does not understand (לְעִצְמוֹ) that he is doing evil to himself (בֵּין)' is on the same lines as V etc.

Ibn Ezra's comments are interesting, and reveal that much discussion had taken place on this clause. He gives the meaning רַק לַעֲשׂוֹת רָע 'except to do evil' and compares the passage to 2.24 where אֵין is used and where the word 'except' must again be supplied or understood. The evidence adduced for this view, though ingenious, is not sound. The construction in 2.24 is אֵין טָרֵב which is usually followed by 'except' i.e. כִּי אִם (3.12; 8.15) or מִן (3.22), whereas in 4.17 the grammar is in order. Nevertheless Ibn Ezra has obtained a satisfactory sense for the passage; as he comments,

'the meaning is that they do not have the positive knowledge to do good' (cf. LXX 'κ' and P). He goes on to quote those who say that although evil is nearer to man's inclination than good, yet fools do not even know how to do it, let alone good. This leaves MT intact and is the position taken by Gordis²¹¹, though he seems to claim it for himself. But does the Hebrew give this sense as it stands? Do we not require **ג** to be inserted between **אֵינֶם** and **יֹדְעִים**? Has **ג** dropped out of the text because of similarity to **אֵינֶם**²¹²? Ibn Ezra further informs us that other scholars explain **רַע** as **רֵצוֹן** 'goodwill' but this need not detain us.

In the same year as C.D. Ginsburg's book, viz. 1861, a Dutch commentary by P. de Jong appeared. In it (according to Wildeboer²¹³) the author suggests an emendation **כִּי אֵינֶם**

יֹדְעִים מַלְעֲשֹׁת רַע claiming that the **ג** had dropped out of the text through haplography. The translation is the same as that of Ibn Ezra. Wildeboer acknowledges the source of this suggested alteration though later scholars attribute it to Siegfried.²¹⁴ It has the advantage of being simple, and the mechanics of it are easily understood, though it must be admitted that the haplography must have taken place before the LXX translation. In 1871 Graetz²¹⁵ in the light of P and T boldly emends the text to read **לֵעֲשֹׂת מְרֹב אֵרֶץ** but this does not commend itself. Delitzsch²¹⁶ followed by Wright²¹⁷

and Euringer²¹⁸ translates the Hebrew 'for the want of knowledge leads them to do evil' but this is an impossible rendering. De Jong's suggestion is followed by Siegfried²¹⁹, McNeile²²⁰, Barton²²¹, Barucq²²² and Scott.²²³

Schmidt²²⁴ emends רע to ער and translates 'for they know nothing else to do', but the examples he cites in support, viz. I Sam 15.28; 28.17; II Sam 2.16; 12.11; Prov 18.17 are all on completely different lines. ער in the sense of 'another thing' does not occur elsewhere, while the phrase 'to do evil' is to be expected when one is speaking of fools.

Hence we are bound to conclude that the Hebrew here defeats us because the obvious meaning will not suit the context. We reject the forced translations above and, sympathising with P and LXX 'א', would emend the text with de Jong to read כי אינם יודעים מלעשות רע thus obtaining the sense that Ibn Ezra claimed was already present in MT.

CHAPTER 5 VERSE 5

MT: אל תתן את פיך לחטוא את בשרך ואל תאמר לפני המלאך כי שגגה היא
למה יקצף האלהים על קוּלְך ותכל את מעשה ידיך

LXX: μὴ δῶς τὸ στόμα σου τοῦ ἑξαμαρτῆσαι τὴν σάρκα σου, καὶ μὴ
εἶπῃς πρὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι ἄγνοιά ἐστίν, ἵνα μὴ ὀργισθῇ
ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ φωνῇ σου καὶ διασπείρῃ τὰ ποιήματα χειρῶν σου

P: לא תתן פִּיךָ לְחַטּוֹת בֶּשָׂרְךָ וְלֹא תֹאמַר לְפָנֵי מַלְאָךְ
כִּי שִׁגְגָה הִיא לְמָה יִקְצֹף אֱלֹהִים עַל קוּלְךָ וְתִכְלֶה אֶת
מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ

V: ne dederis os tuum ut peccare faciat carnem tuam neque
dicas coram angelo non est providentia ne forte iratus
Deus super sermone tuo dissipet cuncta opera manuum
tuarum

T: לא תנבל ית מימר דפומך למגרם דין גהינם עלי בשרך וביום דינא רבא
לא תיכול למימר קדם מלאכא אכזוּא דרדי בך ארום שלותא היא למה
דין יחקף רוגזא דיי על קל מימרך דאתאמר בגבותא ויחבל ית
עובדי ירך

It has already been noted above that the section 4.17-5.6 consists of instruction on how to approach and worship God - 4.17 is the first piece of advice and the first imperative in the book - and, as a result of critical study, some scholars wish to delete the entire section as being out of character with the scepticism to be found elsewhere in Koheleth.²²⁵ Others²²⁶ assign it to Koheleth himself:

I see no reason, however, why the whole of this passage, except the two allusions to dreams, may not belong to Koheleth. His views did not exclude the worship of God altogether, and they would naturally lead him to denounce sham and insincerity in religion. The only real argument against the genuineness of this section is that it interrupts Koheleth's reflections on political affairs, to which the preceding and following sections are devoted. No ancient Jew, however (except possibly the Priestly Writers in the Pentateuch), least of all Koheleth, is sufficiently systematic in the arrangement of his sections, so that this argument can really be of weight where, as here, not a single verse but a whole section intervenes, and that section is not on the whole out of harmony with Koheleth's position.²²⁷

This position of Barton's is the one which finds substantial acceptance today.

מן is used here in the sense of 'permit, allow'; this meaning is maintained in the translation of LXX, P and V. The term פִּיךָ (lit. 'your mouth') occurs in another prohibition (5.1) where it must have the figurative meaning 'speech' or 'words', i.e. 'what comes from the mouth, the organ of speech'.²²⁸ Again, the renderings of the versions

are in harmony with the Hebrew here in that the word for 'mouth' in Greek, Syriac and Latin can also have this figurative meaning. T spells out the meaning of פִּיךָ with "... the word of your mouth ..."

The final part of this clause has been variously interpreted. The root חָטָא means 'to sin' (lit. 'to miss the mark'). In the Hiphil²²⁹ it means 'to cause to sin' (e.g. IK. 14.16) and even 'to charge with sin, condemn' (e.g. Is. 29.21). The interpretation will depend on the total phrase and the context. If, as has been suggested, פִּיךָ is to be understood figuratively, as in 5.1, then the term בָּשָׂר should probably be taken figuratively too. The clause, then, reflects the situation where a man's sayings get him into trouble. In this case בָּשָׂר, taken to refer to 'body', is translated 'self'. For the purposes of translation פִּיךָ may be translated 'your mouth' and the clause rendered: "Do not let your mouth condemn you ..."

The LXX and P translate literally, but while P may carry the meaning which we have given to MT, the LXX "... to lead your flesh²³⁰ to sin ..." may not. This Greek rendering can only be accounted for in the light of the translator's eagerness to represent the details of the Hebrew text before him. The Vulgate too translates literally - "... to make your flesh to sin ..." - and does not obtain the correct sense.

The Targumist's interpretation of the passage is interesting: "Do not make the words of your mouth vile and so bring the judgments of Gehenna upon your flesh" The Hiphil of אָנָן is taken here to mean 'bring punishment or judgment (upon)' and the Targumist has understood the warning to refer to the world to come. The word 'flesh' in this context refers then to the physical element in the judgment of Gehenna.

While T is not followed entirely by any other translation or commentary, the interpretation of לְחַטִּיא 'to bring punishment (upon)' is adopted by Rashi, Ibn Ezra and others²³¹; (though with these commentators the punishment is seen to be exacted in this life.) However, even in this group there is no unanimity as to how בְּנֶכֶד is to be taken. Rabbi Benjamin is quoted in Koheleth Rabban as understanding the word to mean גּוּף 'body', and in this he is followed by Ibn Ezra and others²³²; Rashi, on the other hand, sees in בְּנֶכֶד a reference to one's posterity. It is Rashbam who offers the most sensible interpretation, taking לְחַטִּיא to mean 'to bring guilt (upon)', and בְּנֶכֶד as 'your self' (עַצְמְךָ). The trouble with taking לְחַטִּיא as 'to bring punishment (upon)' is found in the immediate context. The author warns against making the plea 'it was an error'. This is unnecessary if the first clause carries the idea of 'bringing punishment'. The plea

has meaning only if the person who makes the plea is in a state of sin or guilt, not if he has been punished for it.

As for rendering גוֹשׁ 'body' this is to lose the impact of the Hebrew idiom. The idea here is that something small i.e. the mouth, may bring guilt upon the whole, i.e. the entire person.²³³ What is required here is the accusative of 2nd. pers. s. personal pronoun 'you'.²³⁴ Granted, the Hebrew idiom is not entirely preserved, but if 'your body' is the rendering then immediate explanation is required. Rashbam's suggestion is the correct one; Wright arrived at a similar conclusion apparently independent of Rashbam²³⁵ and is followed by many commentators today.²³⁶

The phrase לפני המלאך has occasioned much discussion. M1 is supported by V, Aq. Sym. Theod. and T, while LXX and P read differently. The question arises as to whether LXX and P represent another Hebrew text, viz. לפני האלהים. McNeile argues for the originality of LXX, holding that it represents an earlier reading, and that "... The alteration may have been made from fear of irreverence".²³⁷ McNeile is followed by Barton²³⁸ and Jastrow.²³⁹ In favour of LXX is the fact that it is the earliest translation of the Hebrew, and that the phrase לפני האלהים occurs in 5.1, in another prohibition, and one which is related to 5.5.²⁴⁰ Against it

(LXX) are the other versions and that, apart from P, it stands alone.

We would question McNeile's suggestion that הַלֵּלָה may have been substituted out of considerations of piety. It is true that in both LXX and Targums, direct relationships between God and men are sometimes modified by the translator; but is there any difference between 5.5 and 5.1 which would encourage an editor or a scribe to make this change in the former passage and not in the latter? We think not.

While we would not deny the possibility of McNeile's suggestion, yet we would draw attention to the examples in LXX of Kohelath, where the translator has modified MT in the interests of piety (e.g. in 11.9). It may be that we have a further example of this in 5.5, viz. that the LXX translator, sensing the displeasure of the author at insincere vows, was concerned to indicate that making the lame excuse (שָׁגָה הִיא) in front of the מֵלֶאךָ was tantamount to making the excuse before God himself. The remainder of 5.5. which refers to the resultant anger of God would lead him in that direction, as would the occurrence of לפני האלהים in 5.1.²⁴¹ Hence we are of the opinion that MT is the text underlying LXX and P.

However, even if MT has been established as the original the problem of interpretation remains. It cannot be

demonstrated that LXX took the term $\gamma\alpha\lambda\omega$ as a celestial intermediary; it is likely that if MT had been felt to refer to an angel, the Greek translator would have felt less need to interpret and alter to 'God'. It is more likely, therefore, that the word refers to an official of the Temple, to whom an excuse concerning a vow might be made.

The rendering $\alpha\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ of Aq. Sym. and Theod.²⁴² is ambiguous, but the rendering of V "before the angel" is not. Jerome, in his commentary, gives an alternative rendering, viz. "in conspecto angeli", "in the sight of the angel", and goes on to explain that the words (of the excuse) are not said "into the wind" but that the presiding angel brings them immediately before the Lord.²⁴³

This understanding of the word is taken up by T though with a difference. "... and in the great day of judgment you will not be able to say before the cruel angel who chastises you, that it was an error .." The whole passage has been lifted out of its cultic setting and set in the context of the world to come.

If we look at Koheleth Rabbah we find that $\gamma\alpha\lambda\omega$ is nowhere taken to refer to a celestial or supernatural being. Rabbi Joshua b. Levi is cited as having taken the verse to allude to those who promise publicly to give to charity, but who do not pay, making the excuse to the official²⁴⁴ ($\gamma\alpha\lambda\omega$)

that it was an error. Another interpretation given in the Rabbah is one attributed to Rabbi Benjamin who sees here a reference to those who pretend to know the Torah, and who takes מלאך to refer to הרב 'the teacher'. Yet another, attributed to ר' יוחנן takes מלאך to refer to חכם 'a wise man'. The interesting thing about these interpretations is that the word is always taken to refer to a human being, and each time the person in question has some sort of official standing. It should be noted further that the dates of Rabbi Joshua b. Levi and Rabbi Benjamin are the 3rd. and 2nd. century A.D. respectively. There is, therefore, no evidence that the term מלאך, in Eccles. 5.5, had been interpreted as 'angel' before the date of the Vulgate.²⁴⁵ If the phrase לפני המלאך had been ambiguous to the Rabbis then it is passing strange that there is no interpretation concerning a celestial being in the Midrash Rabbah.²⁴⁶

The history of the interpretation of this phrase indicates that no unanimity has existed as to the meaning of מלאך here. Even those who see a reference to an official are divided as to the office.

Rashi, who points out that the verse is to be seen in the light of the making of vows, explains the term as "an agent (שליח) who comes to claim from you the alms which you promised in public." Rashi is, therefore, very close to Rabbi

Joshua b. Levi except that the term אֱלֹהִים is replaced by שַׁלִּיחַ.

Ibn Ezra, on the other hand, agrees with Jerome's understanding of the term:- "... And know this, that the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Holy One, blessed is He, and he counts all his steps; and a מַלְאָךְ from His attendants (מִשְׁרָתָיו) is appointed to write in a book all human utterings."

At first sight, Rashbam might seem to have read a Hebrew text

לפני האלהים since he tackles the passage as though his Hebrew text read this. But later he defines the term מַלְאָךְ as "the מַלְאָךְ of God" from which it would seem that he took the term to refer to an angel. Sforzo follows the interpretation attributed to the Rabbis, viz. חכם - "the wise man who comes to absolve some one from a vow", while Mendelssohn follows Rashi almost word for word.

Luther translates "coram angelo" agreeing with V, and explains: "quia Deus hunc populum rexit mediantibus angelis"²⁴⁷ ..", "because God ruled this people by the mediation of angels .." He further explains "Idem ergo est coram Angelo atque coram Deo ..", "'Before the angel', however, is the same as 'before God'."²⁴⁸

The AV rendering "before the angel" is accompanied by two marginal references to passages in Scripture, viz. 1 Cor. 11.10 and Mal. 2.7, the latter referring to the priest who is described

as a מלאך . This tentatively suggests that המלאך might be a priestly title of some sort.

The argument for taking מלאך as 'priest' is based on Lev. 4 where regulations are found for dealing with unintentional transgressions²⁴⁹, and where the priest is the person who officiates for the expiation of the person's guilt. Then in Mal. 2.7 we have, "For men hang upon the words of the priest, and seek knowledge and instruction from him, because he is the מלאך of the Lord of Hosts." Again, when the subject of vows is discussed in the late law of Lev. 27. 1-25 men could change their obligation into a money payment, in which case the valuation was made by the priest, and those concerned are directed to stand before the priest (לפני הכהן). Hence there is much to commend the view that מלאך here refers to the priest. Delitzsch observes, "With the author of the Book of Koheleth 'the messenger' is already, without any name of God being added, a priestly title not to be misunderstood ..."²⁵⁰, and in this he is followed by other scholars.²⁵¹

The idea that מלאך = angel is held by C.D. Ginsburg, who, in a lengthy discussion argues that the term refers to "the angel presiding over the altar".²⁵² He points out - and in this he is supported by H.L. Ginsberg²⁵³ - that the phrase אמר לפני supports his viewpoint, but this is not so.²⁵⁴

The construction אמר לפני may be used of persons other than

gods, kings or satraps, e.g. I Sam. 20.1; Ezek. 28.9; cf. also the similar phrase דבר לפני in Nu. 36.1; while the construction אמר אל is used in Exod. 3.11, 13, 15 whether God or Moses is addressed. Besides, even if it could be proved that אמר לפני was cultically confined to 'God' it might be argued that our phrase לפני המלאך is equivalent to the לפני האלהים of 5.1, in that the person is warned that God will react to what he says to the מלאך. Nevertheless, the view that מלאך means 'angel' in this passage has always been held.²⁵⁵

The view that מלאך refers to some Temple emissary has also continued to be held.²⁵⁶ It is likely, however, that those who put forward the idea that the word refers to the חזן, מליח or חכם are merely referring to customs prevalent in the synagogues of their day, and do not reflect knowledge of Temple procedure in the time of Koheleth. We feel, therefore, that the idea that מלאך refers to the priest has the most to commend it.

CHAPTER 5 VERSE 19

MT: כי לא הרבה יזכר את ימי חייו כי האלהים מעבה בשמחת לבו

LXX: ὅτι οὐκ ἄλλα μνησθήσεται τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ζωῆς αὐτοῦ· ὅτι ὁ
θεὸς περισπᾷ αὐτὸν ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ καρδίας αὐτοῦ

P: כִּי לֹא הָרַבָּה יִזְכָּר אֶת יָמָיו כִּי הָאֱלֹהִים מַעְבֵּה בְּשִׂמְחַת לֵבָבוֹ
כִּי לֹא הָרַבָּה יִזְכָּר אֶת יָמָיו כִּי הָאֱלֹהִים מַעְבֵּה בְּשִׂמְחַת לֵבָבוֹ

V: non enim satis recordabitur dierum vitae suae eo quod
Deus occupet deliciis cor eius

T: אַרוֹם לֹא יוֹמִין סְגִיאיִן חַיִּי אֵיבֵשׁ דִּי יִזְכָּר ית יוֹמֵי חַיּוּהִי כִמָּה
מִגְחוֹן עֲתִידִין לִמְהוּיִּי טְבוּן וְכִמָּה מִגְחוֹן עֲתִידִין לִמְהוּיִּי בִישָׁן מִטּוֹל
דְּלֹא אֲתַמְסְרוּ לִבְנֵי אִנְשָׁא אַרוֹם מִן קִדָּם יִי אֲתַגְזֹר עֲלוּהִי כִמָּה יוֹמִין
יִסְתַּגִּיף וְכִמָּה יוֹמִין יַחֲיִי בַחֲדוֹת לִבְנִיה

The problematic nature of this verse has occasioned much discussion, chiefly on the status of הַרְבֵּה in the first clause, and וְנִצְנִי in the second, and has resulted in the relegation of the entire verse to the position of 'gloss'.²⁵⁷ In addition some translations are virtually unintelligible²⁵⁸, while the need has been felt to read the first clause after v.17 in order to obtain sense.²⁵⁹

LXX ὅτι οὐκ ἄλλα is probably a corruption of ὅτι οὐ πολλὰ (LXX B^{ab}). This latter shows that the translator took הַרְבֵּה כִּלְכִּל adverbially, meaning 'not much'. LXX καὶ ὅτι οὐ πολλὰς has the meaning 'not many'; according to this witness, the translator took הַרְבֵּה as an adjective agreeing with ἡμέρας.²⁶⁰

P and V take הַרְבֵּה as an adverb, but the rendering of T "For the days of the life of a man (when he thinks about them) are not many ...", although a paraphrase, clearly shows that the Targumist understood הַרְבֵּה as an adjective.

Kohleth Rabbah and Yalkut Shemoni (ad loc.) make little comment on this passage. Both, however, see the first clause as referring to the generation of Eli. This is not explained further. It may be a reference to I Sam. 2.32 where Eli is told "... never again will there be an old man in your house", and if so, it would indicate that הַרְבֵּה had probably been taken as an adjective.²⁶¹

There is no doubt as to how Rashi understood the word, viz. as an adjective qualifying 'days', and this is true of Ibn Ezra, Rashbam and Mendelssohn. Luther, however, takes it as an adverb²⁶² - "Is enim non anxie recordatur ..", and apart from C.D. Ginsburg²⁶³, who follows the interpretation of T, Rashi, etc., the word הרבה is, today, generally thought to be an adverb modifying יזכר .

It must be acknowledged that if we read with LXX.B, V etc. we read against the punctuation, viz. כי לא הרבה. But apart from the fact that the Masoretes were not infallible, the word order (with the zakef qaton in this position) is ugly in the extreme, and the meaning intended by the Masoretes is forced. This is underlined by the fact that Rashi etc. resort to reconstruction.²⁶⁴

The word הרבה is the infin. abs. Hiphil of רבה I (BDB, KB), and is used in the Old Testament, both as an adjective and as an adverb - the context being the determining factor. In 5.19 the consonantal text presents no difficulty.

לא הרבה is an adverbial phrase modifying יזכר . It is only when a pause is made after הרבה that we can consider another use for the word. The Masoretic punctuation may have been influenced by the phraseology in 11.8, where הרבה is an adjective in a sentence with a vocabulary, remarkably similar to that of 5.19a. , ויזכר את ימי החשך כי הרבה יהיו but

whatever the origin it is this punctuation which has given rise to LXX & AC, the Targumic reading and the interpretations of Rashi etc. It should be pointed out, however, that the construction in 5.19a is very different from that in 11.8, however similar the vocabulary might be. The consonantal text does not pose a problem.

The second half of the verse is even more problematical. The $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\nu$ of LXX, and אֵל of P may possibly indicate that the translators had a Hebrew text which read $\text{לִבּוֹ הָיָה בְּשִׂמְחָה}$, though V gives no indication of having read this- "God occupies his heart with delights". This is substantially the same as Jerome's alternative rendering in his commentary²⁶⁵ except that the plural 'deliciis' is replaced by the singular 'in laetitia'. McNeile is right when he surmises that MT lies behind both renderings²⁶⁶, for although McNeile does not seem to notice, Jerome comments later "Avocat quippe eum Deus in laetitia cordis sui ..", "In fact God diverts him with the joy of his heart". Jerome, therefore, reveals that he read MT, highlighting for us the difficulties of that text.²⁶⁷

T gives a free paraphrase rather than a translation: "... but it is decreed by (lit. from before) the Lord how many days he will be afflicted, and how many days he will live in the joy of his heart". The MT $\text{בְּשִׂמְחָת לִבּוֹ}$ is supported

by T here, and we might think that T offers no further information, but the root אָפּ 'to afflict' corresponds²⁶⁸ to Biblical Hebrew עָנָה 'to afflict'; hence it is likely that the Targumist derived מַעֲנָה from the aforementioned root. Since T employs the passive יִסְתַּגִּיף rather than the active, it follows that the Targumist must have understood the Hebrew to mean "God afflicts him". It cannot, however, be argued that he read מַעֲנָה ; he may just have supplied the required object.

As vocalised by the Masoretes, מַעֲנָה could be either a n.m.s. from עָנָה 'to answer' with the meaning 'answer, reply', or the Hiphil part. from a root עָנָה .²⁶⁹ The first possibility may be ruled out since a verb, not a noun, is desiderated here. The appropriate root will be either 'to answer' or 'to be occupied', since neither 'to humiliate' nor 'to sing' is suitable in the context. But עָנָה 'to answer' does not occur in Biblical Hebrew²⁷⁰ in the Hiphil, hence we are inclined to look at עָנָה 'be occupied'.

This root is peculiar in Biblical Hebrew to the Book of Ecclesiastes, which makes it an interesting possibility. The verb in the Qal occurs at 1.13 and 3.10. But since the verb does not occur in post-biblical Hebrew it has been suggested that it may be an Aramaic loan-word.²⁷¹ To add to this there is the frequent occurrence in Koheleth (and in no other Biblical

book) of the term לְעֹלָה (1.13; 2.23, 26; 3.10; 4.8; 5.2, 13; 8.16) meaning 'task, concern', a noun from this root. The evidence, therefore, points to this root עָלָה 'to be occupied'.

That LXX took מְעַלְלֵם to be from this root seems likely. The same version translates מְעַלְלֵם (1.13; 3.10) by τοῦ περισκάσει i.e. using the same Greek verb (περισκάω) as is used in 5.19. This Greek verb can mean 'to disturb, vex' or 'to divert',²⁷² but the latter is the more likely meaning in this context. The translator thus understood the passage to mean that God has organised things to the extent that the man, to whom God gives the ability to enjoy his lot, is so engrossed in his enjoyment that he doesn't notice the brevity of life. God diverts his attention by supplying enjoyment.²⁷³ It is impossible to say what root is presupposed by P.

We cannot be certain whether the LXX translator had a text before him which read מְעַלְלֵם . If MT $\text{וַשְׁמַחַת לְבָנָה}$ is original (as we have argued above) then an accusative is called for in the context, and the accusative suffix לָהּ may well be original.²⁷⁴ We can be certain, however, that if the original text read מְעַלְלֵם the לָהּ had dropped out by the time of Jerome.

It is difficult to know how Rashi understood this passage since he takes מְעַלְלֵם to be a noun. Ibn Ezra is more

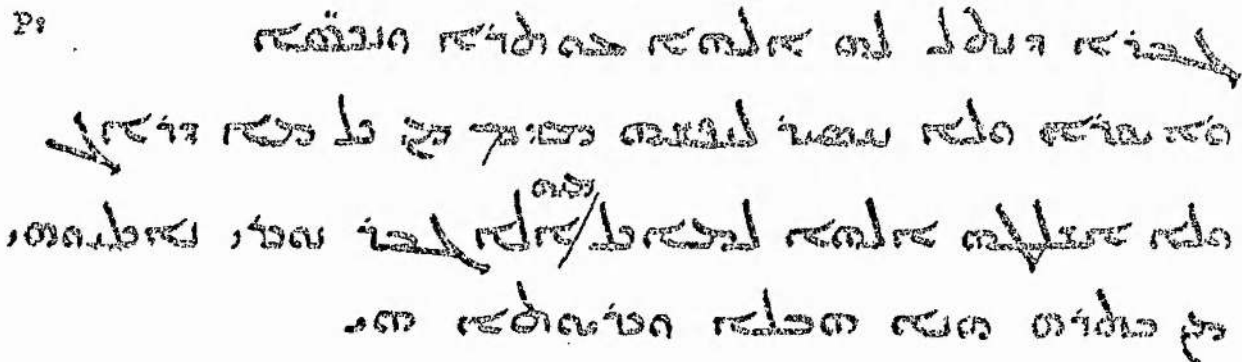
relevant here. He defines the word with מַצִּיא 'provides' presumably taking it from עָנָה 'to answer', 'to respond kindly' (cf. Ibn Ezra on 10.19). Rashbam takes it as Hiphil of עָנָה 'to sing', while Luther²⁷⁵ "quia Deus implet laetitia cor eius", falling back on V in that 'his heart' is the object of the verb, has not translated מַעֲבֵה but occupet (V) and taken it in the sense of 'filling'. We feel that Rashi's position is impossible here in that a verb is required by the context. Rashbam's too is forced. As Wright remarks, "But if it had been the author's intention to express this idea (that of singing) he would certainly have made use of a less ambiguous verb".²⁷⁶

The choice is therefore between following LXX or Ibn Ezra, between עָנָה 'be occupied' and עָנָה 'to answer'. There is no unanimity on this question; although the majority of scholars²⁷⁷ favour עָנָה 'be occupied', some²⁷⁸ prefer עָנָה 'to answer'. But whichever root we choose we must assume that the original Hebrew was either מַעֲבֵה אֹתוֹ or מַעֲבֹהוּ, since the Hiphil of either root requires an accusative; מַעֲבֹהוּ is the one which is generally preferred.

CHAPTER 6 VERSE 2

MT: איש אשר יתן לו האלהים עשר ובכסים וכבוד ואיבדו חסר לנפשו מכל
אשר יתאוו ולא ישליטנו האלהים לאכל ממנו כי איש נכרי יאכלנו
זה הגל וחלי דע הוא

LXX: ἀνὴρ ὃς δώσει αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς πλοῦτον καὶ ὑπάρχοντα καὶ δόξαν, καὶ
οὐκ ἔστιν ὑστερῶν τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ πάντων ἃ ἐπιθυμῇ καὶ
οὐκ ἐξουσιάζει αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς τοῦ φαγεῖν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἀνὴρ ξένος
φάγεται αὐτόν. τοῦτο ματαιότης καὶ ἀρρωστία πονηρά, ἐστίν

P: 

V: vir cui dedit Deus divitias et substantiam et honorem et
nihil deest animae eius ex omnibus quae desiderat nec
tribuit ei potestatem Deus ut comedat ex eo sed homo
extraneus vorabit illud hoc vanitas et magna miseria est

T: גבר די הב ליה יי במזליה עותר ויקר ובכסין וליתוהי מחסר לבפשיה
מכל די יתרעי ולא אשלטיה יי על חובתיה למטעם מביה אלהן ימות
בלא ולד ולא חס קריביה לאחסבותיה ליה ארום אנתתיה תהא מתגסבא
לגבר חילונאי ויחסבינה ויכליניה כל דין גרמו ליה חרבוהי ולא
עבד מביה מדעם טב ואתהפיך עתריה למהוי ליה להבלו ולמרעא בישא

In 6.1f. Koheleth is concerned to show that one of the greatest evils he²⁷⁹ has observed is the fact that some men are not given the ability to enjoy what wealth and substance they have. They seem to be constitutionally incapable of taking any enjoyment from the good things which are at their disposal. What makes it even more distasteful is that a stranger, who presumably has the capacity to enjoy such things, may step in and consume the wealth of a man thus incapacitated.

Koheleth is not interested here in the question of how the rich obtained their wealth. It is not the miserly, referred to in 5.10ff., that he has in mind, nor even the חסא in 2.26. He attributes the wealth etc. to God אשר יתן לו

האלהים and this is underlined by the expansion in the Targum במזליה "in His providence". Jerome, therefore, interprets wrongly when he comments²⁸⁰: "Describet avarum divitem .." - "He describes the greedy rich ..". Rashi is to some extent following Jerome when he gives as a reason for God's withholding the ability to enjoy כי שראף לעשוק ולהרבות

הון "... but (he) longs to gather and pile up wealth ..". But these interpretations have been dictated by homiletical considerations; these two commentators seem not content to allow Koheleth to ask the question: 'Why are some wealthy men unable to enjoy their substance?' Both try to answer the question for him.

The word כבוד has usually been rendered 'honour'.²⁸¹ The three words עשר ונכסים וכבוד appear in 2 Chron. 1.11 with respect to Solomon and in that sequence as Wright has observed²⁸²; but even if כבוד in the Chronicles passage has the meaning 'honour' - and this is not certain - it does not follow that Koheleth has this meaning in mind here.²⁸³ It is true that the word in the Old Testament usually carries this meaning but it can also mean 'riches, wealth, abundance',²⁸⁴ as in Ps. 49.17; Prov. 3.16; 8.18; Is. 10.3; 61.6; 66.12 etc.; hence it must be considered at least a possibility at this stage. It cannot be said with any certainty just how the medieval Hebrew commentators understood the word. Rashi speaks only of the handling of riches²⁸⁵, until he takes a second look at the words. Then he interprets allegorically i.e. עשר = Scripture; נכסים = Mishnah; and כבוד = Aggadah.²⁸⁶ Ibn Ezra comments only on נכסים, while Rashbam seems to subsume all three terms under one - איש שנותן לו הק' עשר גדול ואין לו - "a man to whom God gives great riches but he has no..." It is possible that Rashbam has taken כבוד as meaning riches of some kind which is what Ginsburg claims.²⁸⁷ Mendelssohn uses the word without explaining it. However, when he goes on to say - "... nevertheless he has no profit from his possessions, but leaves his substance and treasures to others" the impression is

obtained that for him כבוד has a concrete meaning - something which could be referred to by the word 'possessions' 'substance' 'treasures'.

• It must, however, be admitted that if כבוד is translated 'honour' or 'glory', its connection with the verb אכל presents a problem. Ginsburg argues that this translation is "... incompatible with the verb לאכל inasmuch as it would be preposterous to say 'he cannot eat his honour..',²⁸⁸ Wright does not answer this objection satisfactorily by observing that "'to eat' is used metaphorically in the sense of 'to enjoy'".²⁸⁹ What does it mean to enjoy one's honour? In particular how can a stranger enjoy the glory of another man?²⁹⁰ The riches and possessions of a man may be transferred to another who may consume or enjoy them, but the honour of a man cannot be so transferred. What is required here is something more concrete - something akin to 'riches'; hence the more appropriate rendering of כבוד is 'abundance'.²⁹¹ That this is more likely is supported by the passage Is. 61.6 already referred to above. There the word כבוד occurs parallel to חיל where the latter must have the meaning 'wealth' (cf. RSV, NEB). Unfortunately the verb linked with כבוד is unintelligible, but its parallel in the previous stiche is אכל which is that used with כבוד here in Eccles. 6.2.

לנפשו probably, 'for himself'. As Delitzsch rightly remarks²⁹², this is synonymous with לעצמו found in later Hebrew.

אכל : לאכל 'to eat' must be taken in a transferred sense here. The verb occurs in the Old Testament when the subject is 'fire' or 'sword' with the meaning 'consume, devour' (Hos. 11.6; Jer. 2.33), but in passages such as Prov. 30.20 and Job 21.25 the sense must be 'to enjoy'. This is the desiderated meaning in Eccles. 6.2, as it is in 5.18.²⁹³ The word 'enjoy' must not be taken to mean the enjoyment a miser might have of riches; rather it is enjoyment obtained from using the wealth that is meant by אכל . The translation 'consume, eat' is, therefore, inadequate in that a man may consume it without profit and so be miserable.

LXX, P, S^h ~~למנוח~~ and V do not convey this meaning²⁹⁴; the Targum למנוח comes nearest to 'enjoy'.²⁹⁵ That the Targumist had this meaning in mind is supported by the fact that he did not employ the Aramaic verb אכל ; the latter is equivalent to the Hebrew except that it does not seem to have the meaning 'to enjoy'.²⁹⁶

Rashi understands the word in this way: שיהא שמח בחלקו

.. 'למצוא קורת בעשרו' that he might rejoice in his lot, to find satisfaction in his riches ..' and Rashbam's expansion

שיאכל ויהנה ממנו suggests that he too sees אכל in much

the same light. Mendelssohn's comment 'nevertheless he has no profit from his possessions...' is in line with Rashbam's, as is Luther's "frui".²⁹⁷

With the exception of Mendelssohn, the pattern, after Luther's time, is to render the verb here 'to eat',²⁹⁸ and it is not until Delitzsch's commentary²⁹⁹ that we find it properly understood again.

The root שלט seldom occurs in Biblical Hebrew, and when it does appear it is in the later books.³⁰⁰ It is possibly an Aramaic loan-word³⁰¹, since it is found frequently in Biblical Aramaic³⁰² and in Targumic Aramaic.³⁰³ It also occurs in post-Biblical Hebrew.³⁰⁴ The verb - from which we get our word 'Sultan' - has the meaning 'to domineer, have mastery over', and in the Hiphil 'to give mastery to'. God is depicted here as the oriental ruler who has absolute power over men; not only does he give a man wealth and possessions, it is he who decides whether or not a particular man may use and enjoy these gifts. Koheleth deplores this state of affairs - זֶה הוּא וְחָלִי רַע הוּא . The implication is that God is to blame, since he is the author of it. As a result of this fierce accusation, there have been attempts in the history of the exegesis of this passage to justify God's action on the grounds that such a man, as here referred to, does not deserve to enjoy his wealth.

The Targum interprets the withholding of this power to enjoy as being due to the sins of a man על חטאיו. On the man's inability to enjoy his wealth coupled with the stranger's enjoyment of it, the Targumist comments: "... all this his sins have brought upon him, because he effected no good with it (i.e. wealth) .."

We have already observed that Jerome and Rashi have referred to the man in the passage as greedy and miserly, and in this way the impression is given that he is undeserving, that he has given God reason to withhold from him the ability to enjoy. Rashi underlines this when, in his allegorical interpretation of the passage³⁰⁵, he comments "... he does not give him power because he is unworthy with respect to Gemara, and because of this there is no benefit from it, not a word of teaching." That is to say it is clear that Rashi feels that the question Koheleth asks is unwarranted: God always has a reason for his actions; it may be that the reason is not apparent, but if we examine the matter closely, we find that the man who is not able to enjoy his God-given wealth has displeased God in some way, and has been found wanting, and hence is unworthy to receive the necessary power of enjoying his riches.

In Rashbam's comments the role of God is underplayed in that God is not referred to in describing the man's inability

to profit from his riches:- ואין לו יכולת ורשות שיאכל ויהנה

ממנו "... but he has not got the ability or power to enjoy and benefit from it (i.e. the wealth) ..". Mendelssohn follows on the same lines. Although the latter sees these words as from the mouth of an objector, and not Koheleth (see above), it appears that he found the thought of this passage too offensive; this is shown in that God is not depicted as withholding the enjoyment from the man. "... but nevertheless he has no profit from his possessions ..." In the light of the fact that Mendelssohn offers what is virtually a paraphrase of the passage, it must be concluded that the omission of God's contribution to the problem, raised in the passage, is deliberate and is due to considerations of piety.

כי איש בכרי יאכלנו : A contrast seems to be made here between the initial possessor of the wealth and the person who does in fact enjoy it. The passage states that God does not give him the ability לאכל ממנו while the בכרי יאכלנו : that is to say the former seems unable to enjoy any of the wealth³⁰⁶ while the latter enjoys it in toto.³⁰⁷

The phrase איש בכרי has been variously understood. It occurs in Deut. 17.15 but nowhere else in Biblical Hebrew, though the word בכרי occurs alone.³⁰⁸ In this Deuteronomic passage the phrase is followed by a clause of explanation -

איש זכרי אשר לא אחיך " . . . a foreigner, one who is not of your own race." (NEB) That this is the meaning in the latter passage is clear from the context which treats of the appointment of a king in Israel and where the addressee is Israel as a nation. זכרי however can also mean "strange, unknown, unfamiliar"³⁰⁹, while in later Hebrew the term can mean 'Gentile'³¹⁰, and even אחי 'another', and בן משפחה 'someone from another family'.³¹¹ Our choice of meaning will be determined by the interpretation we give to the passage as a whole.

It is therefore proper to recall what Koheleth's intention is in this passage. Is his main concern here with the kind of person who will inherit the wealth of the rich man? Is it not with the frustration of a man who cannot enjoy his riches?³¹² Gordis argues against taking the meanings 'foreigner' and 'man of another family' - "Koheleth is devoid of strong nationalistic feeling or of a developed sense of family solidarity. That a kinsman would inherit the property which a man has failed to enjoy in his own lifetime would not diminish the tragedy for Koheleth. The next verse emphatically illustrates this truth. For Koheleth, the individualist, each man is a stranger to his fellows, even to members of his own family".³¹³

Gordis is right in his implication that the central

feature in the passage is the man's failure to enjoy his goods, but he goes too far when he strips Koheleth of any family feeling and rules out the possibility that אִישׁ זָכָרִי means 'one of another family'.³¹⁴ The entire phrase כִּי אִישׁ זָכָרִי יֵאָכֵל must be seen, therefore, as rubbing salt in the wound of the rich man. The next verse, as Gordis maintains, shows that there is no compensation for this lack of enjoyment, but the final irony is that the אִישׁ זָכָרִי does enjoy it.

LXX and P do not offer much help in interpretation here.³¹⁵ Vulgate 'homo extraneus' is a broad term and might yield the meaning 'from another family', but in his commentary, Jerome³¹⁶ uses the adjective 'alienus' which would indicate that he did not have the meaning 'from another family' in mind. The Targum is the only version where we can be certain as to the interpretation of the translator. "... but he dies childless and his relative was not concerned about his inheritance, but his wife will be married to a stranger (גִּבּוֹר חֵילִיזָאִי), who shall take possession of it and consume it ...". The translator, it would seem, has understood אִישׁ זָכָרִי as 'a man from another family' and in his paraphrase proceeds to create a situation where such a person might inherit.³¹⁷ The interpretation 'of another family' is followed by Mendelssohn³¹⁸ and others.³¹⁹

It has been noted above that the Midrash Rabbah interprets the passage allegorically; hence **אִישׁ זָכָרִי** is taken as "the master of Talmud". Rashi's allegorical interpretation takes the term to refer to "the master of Gemara". Nothing may be legitimately inferred from this, though it is unlikely that, had the term meant 'foreigner' or 'Gentile' or had any hostile sense to either the Midrash Rabbah or Rashi, such an allegorical interpretation could have been attached to it.

Rashi does not explain the term in its plain sense; he points out that the stranger shall do charity with the money and consequently benefit from it. Rashi has therefore turned Koheleth's sceptical question into a pious statement. Ibn Ezra does not comment at all on the words, while Rashbam merely observes that the stranger who enjoys the wealth has not taken pains in acquiring it.

Siegfried argues³²⁰ that the term refers simply to another person, equivalent to **אִישׁ אֲחֵר**, and Gordis's interpretation is substantially the same³²¹, but against this interpretation is the fact that we would expect the Hebrew to be **אִישׁ אֲחֵר**. Again, in spite of the fact that Koheleth is an individualist, he is not entirely lacking in family feeling and awareness³²²; in fact the implication in 4.7f. is that it may be worth while to toil if one has a family to inherit the results. Therefore

the interpretation 'another' is inadequate. It is true Koheleth would have felt it a sad state of affairs if the wealth of a rich man could be used and enjoyed by his family but not by himself; but not so frustrating as when that wealth is enjoyed by a stranger. This, for Koheleth, is a frustration; a sad defect. Consequently the phrase is to be translated "stranger" or "strange man" and to be understood as someone unknown to the rich man, probably of another family.

"To depart this life without issue, and to leave one's possessions to strangers, was one of the greatest calamities that could befall an Eastern. When God appeared to Abraham (Gen. XV. 1-5), and told him that he was his shield, and promised to reward him greatly, the aged patriarch at once exclaimed 'מה נתן לי' "what canst thou give when I am going off childless, and when the owner of my house is to be Dammesek Eliezer," No blessing could compensate the absence of children, and no sorrow was greater to him than to leave his acquired property to a stranger, though this stranger was his faithful servant. איש בכרי , a stranger, one of another family, in contradistinction to one's own son." 323

CHAPTER 10 VERSE 17

MT: אשריך ארץ שמלכך בן חוריים ושריך בעת יאכלו בגבורה ולא בשתי

LXX: μακαρία, γῆ, ἧς ὁ βασιλεὺς σου υἱὸς ἐλευθέρων, καὶ οἱ
ἀρχόντες σου πρὸς κοῖρον φάγονται ἐν δυνάμει καὶ
οὐκ αἰσχυνθήσονται

P: *אשריך ארץ שמלכך בן חוריים ושריך בעת יאכלו בגבורה ולא בשתי*
אשריך ארץ שמלכך בן חוריים ושריך בעת יאכלו בגבורה ולא בשתי

V: beata terra cuius rex nobilis est et cuius principes
vescuntur in tempore suo ad reficiendum et non ad
luxuriam

T: טוב לך ארעא זישראל בעידן די ימלוך חזקיהו בר אחז די הוא מן
יחוס בית דוד מלכא זישראל די הוא גיבר חקיף באורייתא ונפיק
ידי הרבת פיקודיא ורברבניך בתר דמקרבין תמידא אכלין לחמא
בזמן ארבע שעין מן עמל ידיהון בגבורת אורייתא ולא בחלשות
ובסמיות עינא

Vv. 16f. are a unit in a miscellaneous collection of sayings - v.16, 'Woe to you O land ..', v.17, 'Happy are you O land ..'. The factors which go to ensure well-being for a country are: 1) that the king is not a child but a noble, and 2) that the princes of that land eat not in the morning but at the proper meal time, and soberly.

The final phrase *בגבורה ולא בשתי* may possibly be an addition to the original text - perhaps a marginal explanatory gloss which was incorporated into the text itself by a copyist. But if this is so then the incorporation took place at an early stage in transmission, since all the versions seem to have read it.

The contrasts in these verses are *בער* with *בן חורים*, and *בעת* with *בוקר*. The phrase *בגבורה ולא בשתי* refers by way of explanation to the latter comparison, i.e. a development of *בעת*.

It is this latter phrase which has occasioned the real difficulty in the verse. *בגבורה* from the root *גבר* 'to be strong', has the meaning 'strength', while *שתי* from *שתה* 'to drink' means 'drinking'. But if we read '... and whose princes feast at the proper time, with strength and not in drinking' the meaning is not clear. It is better to take

בגבורה as 'with self-control'³²⁴ and *בשתי* as being intended to convey the lack of self-control as displayed by

drinking to excess. i.e. '... and whose princes feast at the proper time, with self-control and not in drunkenness'.

LXX '... and whose princes eat seasonably, in strength, and they shall not be ashamed,' at first sight gives the impression of having read ולא יבוש rather than

but, as we shall see, this is not likely. P

'... with diligence and not in feasting' is substantially the same as MT, while neither T '... in the strength of the Torah and not in weakness and blindness' nor V '... ad reficiendum et non ad luxuriam' '... for the purposes of refreshment and not dissipation' show any sign of having read any form of the verb

בוש . sh ~~במשל~~ as we would expect, follows LXX.

When we come to the Midrash Rabbah we notice that בעת is given the meaning בעתו של עה"ב 'in the time of the world to come', while our phrase is interpreted בגבורתו ולא

בחשישו 'in its strength and not in its weakness', the suffix possibly referring to 'the world to come', though this is not clear. At the beginning of the Midrash on this verse

בשמי is cited as the accepted text. But the Rabbis were not confined to the scope of the word before them; they could select a word which resembled it in some way if, for example, they found it offensive, or if the word resembling it proved useful homiletically. In this instance בחשיש is

numerically³²⁵ equal to גמלי (i.e. 1012) and so would be an acceptable means of explaining the word.³²⁶ The point of this observation is to demonstrate that the Rabbis found בשתי offensive enough to avoid commenting upon it. The reason is not clear at first; there is very little reference in the Midrash to this particular passage. However, the Rabbis, who use vv.16f. to discuss Solomon's judging of the two harlots and the baby, go on to say that 'the princes who feast at the right time' are the Kings of Judah. This fact, then, may have motivated the alteration of the word.

If we look again at the ג ³²⁷ we notice that in place of חלישות . $\text{ולא בחלישות ובסמיות עינא}$ we have ולא בשתי means 'weakness' and we are reminded of the Midrash. Graetz³²⁸ suggests that the Targumist has made a double translation of שתי , viz. from חש 'weak', involving a transposition of the radicals, and שם העין 'closing of the eye', using the radicals of שתי to produce an expression parallel to 'weakness'. This latter supposition by Graetz is dubious, but the former is certainly possible and may even have been the basis for the Midrash reference.

But having noticed this further avoidance of בשתי in ג we observe that the verse has been applied historically, as was v.16 in this version, and that Hezekiah is the king in question - 'from the family of the house of David, and mighty

in the Torah ..'. It is therefore likely that this application is the basis of the apparent difficulty with the term *בטעם* .. the expunging of a pejorative reference. This is probably the motivation behind the Midrash's comment.

Rashi does not apply either v.16 or v.17 to any historical situation or person and so *בטעם* is not a problem for him. He comments briefly on the passage, '... for they (i.e. the princes) engage in the strength of wisdom and understanding, and not in the drinking of wine.'

Ibn Ezra too has no interest in the historical application of the passage, and hence is not inhibited. He interprets, '... they do not eat except for need, and not on account of pleasure', taking the phrase as expressing purpose and not manner, and so follows the Vulgate here. The same can be said for Rashbam.

We conclude that the problem for Midrash Rabbah and T is the historical application of the passage, and not inherent in the text itself. Further, the LXX reflects the same disinclination to read the Hebrew *בטעם* and we can only surmise that this same historical application is the key to the motivation of the Greek translator also.³²⁹ No other witness betrays another Hebrew text. Hence MT is not in question. The fact that Midrash Rabbah uses MT as a starting point to move to a position akin to T strengthens our opinion here; besides, a

verb following בגבורה (LXX) is not likely. MT בנתי is at least grammatically preferable.

However, the problem of interpretation is not quite solved. ב in בגבורה and בנתי has been given the force of purpose by V, Ibn Ezra, Luther³³⁰ and others.³³¹ We repeat that the key word is בעת 'at the right time'. The final words are a comment upon this - either as a gloss or as an expanding note. We are, therefore, dealing with the manner in which the princes were accustomed to eat. P 'with diligence' at least gets away from the vagueness of LXX, 'in strength', as does Sym. μετὰ ἀνδραγαθίας 'with manly virtue'. Barucq³³², 'comme des hommes', Zimmerli³³³, 'als Männer', Hertzberg³³⁴, 'mit Mannessinn' and Siegfried³³⁵, 'in männlicher Art' are substantially the same and must come near the meaning of the term. The trouble with these renderings is that they are not self-evident; they need comment. Hence we stick to KB and NEB - 'with self-control'.

בנתי may mean 'in drinking' but this translation is not adequate. P 'and not in feasting' is no better. We require something of the nature of drinking or feasting in excess, since drinking per se would not be condemned by the author.³³⁶ Again, בגבורה which is set in contrast with בנתי, must also be used in determining the meaning of the latter, i.e. a lack of self-control. Hence we are of the

opinion that v, although mistranslating, has, in the word
'luxuriam' obtained the correct nuance here.³³⁷ Zimmerli³³⁸,
'und nicht als Zecher', Barucq³³⁹, 'et non comme des buveurs'
and NEB 'and not as drunkards', though a little free have
captured the sense of the phrase.

CHAPTER 10 VERSE 19

MT:

לשחקן עשים לחם ויין וסמס חיים וקטנה תא הכל

LXX: εἰς γέλωτα ποιῶσιν ἄρτον, καὶ οἶνον καὶ ἔλαιον τοῦ
εὐφρανθῆναι ζῶντας, καὶ τοῦ ἀργυρίου ταπεινώσει ὑπακούσεται
τὰ πάντα

P: ~~לשחקן עשים לחם ויין וסמס חיים וקטנה תא הכל~~
~~לשחקן עשים לחם ויין וסמס חיים וקטנה תא הכל~~
~~לשחקן עשים לחם ויין וסמס חיים וקטנה תא הכל~~

V: in risu faciunt panem ac vinum ut epulentur viventes
et pecuniae oboedient omnia

T: לחוכא עבדין צויקיא לחם לפרנסא עביין כפיבין וחמרא דמזגין
לדחייין (ס"א לרצוצין) יהי להון להדוא לעלמא דאחי וכסף
פורקניהון יסהיר עליהון זכוחא לעלמא דאחי באנפי כולא

This verse is a Wisdom saying set in a collection which has no single theme; its position at this point is not because its content has any connection with what goes before or what comes after. The thought of the passage is that food and wine provide the necessary relief from the boredom of life, and that money is the *sine qua non* of it all.

לַחֲיוֹק עֲשִׂים לֶחֶם וַיֵּין יִסְמַח חַיִּים 'Men prepare food for good cheer, and wine makes life happy'. The LXX 'For laughter they make bread, and wine and oil to gladden the living' is not equivalent to MT. To begin with καὶ ἔλαιον = Hebrew

וַשֶּׁמֶן 'and oil', while appearing also in P, is not represented in MT, LXX AC, S^h, Theod., V, or T. It would seem, therefore, that this does not indicate another Hebrew text underlying LXX B and P, but rather that the LXX translator, aware of the common sequence of corn, wine and oil, filled out what seemed to him to be an incomplete reference.³⁴⁰ The P translator has probably followed LXX for identical reasons.

On the question of what underlies τοῦ ἐνφρανθῆναι we note that of the Greek witnesses, Theod. alone follows this.³⁴¹ That V - '... ac vinum ut epulentur viventes', "... and wine that the living may feast" - read לַחֲמֹץ is possible but unlikely; so also with P ~~וַשֶּׁמֶן~~. What has taken place has been that the translators of LXX 'B' and V, have taken לַחֲמֹץ as the double object of עֲשִׂים.

Having done so there is no subject for יִשְׁמַח and this has to be resolved, the easiest way being that found in these versions. It should be said that P ~~יִשְׁמַח~~ shows that the translator has taken לִמְנוּחַ יִי as the double subject of the passive participle; but the same problem is raised by יִשְׁמַח and the P solution is the same. $\text{LXX}\kappa\alpha\sigma\ \sigma\iota\nu\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\upsilon\phi\rho\alpha\iota\nu\epsilon\iota$ and Sh יִשְׁמַח יִי preserve the original reading of יִי as subject.

Y, although paraphrasing and elaborating, supports the double clause in MT, לִמְנוּחַ being the object of עֲבֹדֵי יִי and יִי יִשְׁמַח corresponding to יִי יִשְׁמַח , while Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Luther seem to follow MT as far as the grammar is concerned.

Having established MT here, the problem of interpretation remains. The construction עֲשֵׂים לִמְנוּחַ occurs in only one other place in the Old Testament, viz. Ezek. 4.15, though

עָשָׂה 'to prepare' occurs elsewhere - Gen. 18.7f; Jud. 6.19; Gen. 19.3. In the Ezekiel passage the thought is that of preparing food or making bread. It is, therefore, possible that the same meaning holds for this verse in Koheleth. However, if we translate לְשִׁחוֹק 'for laughter' then the first clause will require further interpretation, e.g. RSV 'Bread is made for laughter ...' cf. also LXX

$\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omega\tau\alpha\ \kappa\omicron\iota\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\tau\omicron\nu$, V 'in risu faciunt panem ...'.

But if in the light of 2.2 where לשחוק is parallel to

לשמחה, we understand it as 'for entertainment' or 'for amusement' (cf. Zimmerli, 'zum Vergnügen'³⁴², Barucq, 'pour s'égayer'³⁴³), we obtain an intelligible rendering, viz. 'for entertainment (men) prepare food ..'. P ~~לשמחה~~ is the only version definitely³⁴⁴ to take this line, using the same root as for שמח later in the verse.

The meaning 'for laughter' which is the only sense of LXX and V, may have been brought about by the general connection of this verse with vv.16f; that is, עשׂים was taken, not as impersonal but as referring back to 'the princes who feast in the morning' (cf. Mendelssohn). Midrash Rabbah לעשות

של יראת עשׂים להם 'for the revelries of idolatry they prepare food' feels the need to considerably modify לשחוק in order to link the passages. But if, as we have stated, this verse is an isolated saying with no intrinsic connection with v.16, then the latter passage will not influence our translation. P, as we have observed, translated עשׂים as ~~לשמחה~~ 'for rejoicing, bread, wine and oil are made ..' and this may indicate a break with the tradition of connecting the participle with v.16.

Rashi, who follows P with לעשות, goes on to quote an 'anonymous opinion' which states that 'a great feast is called להם' citing in support the Aramaic phrase in Dan. 5.1

בלשצר מלכא עגור לחם רב . In Hebrew, לחם means 'bread' or 'food' but never 'feast',³⁴⁵ and this is borne out by the versions on this passage - even T probably uses לחם to mean 'food' - 'for enjoyment the righteous make food to nourish the hungry poor ..'. In fact the Old Testament has a phrase 'to prepare a feast' viz. צמח משחה (Gen. 18.3), an idiom still in vogue in Modern Hebrew and probably equivalent to עגור לחם of Dan. 5.1. Hence we reject Rashi's interpretation 'feast'.³⁴⁶

ויין ישמח חיים "And wine makes life pleasant". Many see here the influence of Ps. 104.15 ויין ישמח לב אנוש . The versions take חיים as 'the living'.³⁴⁷ It would seem that Midrash Rabbah, Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Mendelssohn and Luther³⁴⁸ understand it in this way also. The AV margin 'maketh glad the life' is the first³⁴⁹ to break from this tradition. Koheleth uses the word a number of times in the book, with and without the article, but the context is the only factor in determining the sense in which it is used. שמח in the Piel usually takes a personal object, e.g. Jud. 9.13; Prov. 10.1; but often the object is לב e.g. Ps. 104.15; Prov. 15.30; 27.9, 11. and even נפש Ps. 86.4. The sense required by this passage is akin to that of לב and נפש viz. 'life' - 'wine cheers life'. This sense is followed by most commentators, with the exception of Graetz³⁵⁰, Siegfried³⁵¹ and Gordis.³⁵²

Taking both clauses together, the thought is that food and wine are the necessary ingredients for a cheerful life.

וְכֹהֵלֶתִּן יָעֲנֶה אֶת כָּל דָּבָר - The plain sense of this clause is 'And money answers (for) everything.' Koheleth has just stated that food and wine are basic to קִיּוּם and שִׂמְחָה ; here money is said to be the prerequisite of everything.

הַכֹּל will refer back to לֶחֶם and יַיִן and hence to שִׂמְחָה and קִיּוּם . This is perhaps a surprising statement in a Wisdom book. There are many references to the value of wisdom exceeding that of money (Prov. 3.14; 8.10; 16.16; Job. 28.15 etc.); even Eccles. 5.9f. points to the disadvantages of wealth. It may be that Koheleth has merely recorded both these attitudes to money because he himself found that, to a certain degree, both obtained.

LXX has a confused text here. $\tau\alpha\chi\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\sigma\epsilon\iota$ can either be dative sing. from $\tau\alpha\chi\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\sigma\tau\epsilon\iota$, or 3rd sing. masc. fut. from $\tau\alpha\chi\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\omega$, but in either case the passage as it stands is difficult to translate. Since LXX $\kappa^{\epsilon\alpha}$ AC omit this word with Sh , and since the clause then makes sense - 'and all things will obey money' - it is likely that $\tau\alpha\chi\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\sigma\epsilon\iota$ does not belong in the original. As a verb $\tau\alpha\chi\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\sigma\epsilon\iota$ means 'will humble, afflict, weaken' and we note that יַעֲנֶה taken as the Piel יַעֲנֶה from III עָנָה (BDB) has this meaning. It may be, therefore, that LXX B represents a double rendering

of $\pi\alpha\upsilon\varsigma$. As $\epsilon\kappa\alpha\kappa\acute{o}\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$ may take the genitive, it is likely that $\tau\alpha\kappa\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\sigma\epsilon\iota$ is from a later hand. ($\tau\acute{o}\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\upsilon\epsilon\iota\omicron\upsilon$ fits grammatically with $\epsilon\kappa\alpha\kappa\acute{o}\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$, but not with $\tau\alpha\kappa\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\sigma\epsilon\iota$) LXX however has taken $\kappa\lambda\eta \alpha\kappa$ as subject of this clause though there is evidence both from word order and from LXX AC $\sigma\ddot{\upsilon}\nu \tau\grave{\alpha} \kappa\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha$ that the translator read MT. For $\tau\alpha\kappa\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\sigma\epsilon\iota$ to make sense in the context 'money' requires to be in the nominative. Then the sense is 'But money will afflict all things'. This may have been the tradition represented by $\tau\alpha\kappa\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\sigma\epsilon\iota$ - a pejorative reference to money.

It is interesting that P has two finite verbs in this clause also - 'And money humbles and deceives them in all things'. The first one - ~~$\kappa\alpha\tau\epsilon\iota\lambda\epsilon\gamma\epsilon$~~ is a translation of $\pi\alpha\upsilon\varsigma$ Piel of III $\pi\alpha\upsilon$, and corresponds to $\tau\alpha\kappa\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\sigma\epsilon\iota$ of LXX; the second, ~~$\pi\alpha\tau\epsilon\iota$~~ reinforces the pejorative reference to money. 353

V 'et pecuniae obcedient omnia' 'and all things obey money' agrees with S^h, and what we feel to have been the original LXX reading. It is difficult to explain why $\kappa\lambda\eta \alpha\kappa$ should have been taken as nominative by LXX etc. The sense obtained is similar to that of MT, but we have no doubt that the latter lies behind these renderings. (cf. Sym. $\acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\upsilon\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu \delta\grave{\epsilon} \epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta\rho\eta\sigma\acute{\eta}\sigma\epsilon\iota \epsilon\iota\varsigma \kappa\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha$ 'But money is serviceable

for everything' where MT word order is vouched for and where מִכֶּסֶף is the subject.)

T 'And their redemption money will proclaim their merit in the world to come, before all' like the rest of the verse, is a good example of how the T at times becomes nothing but an Aramaic Midrash. Here, 'money' is the subject and מְבַרֵּךְ is taken in the sense of 'proclaim', but there is no reason to believe that a text other than MT lies behind this.

Midrash Rabbah, like the Targum, does not deal faithfully with the text. Having quoted the clause, it cites a saying by R. Joshua of Sikinim - 'Sometimes (a man's prayer) is answered, at other times not. When he uses his money for charity he is answered, as it is said (Gen. 30.33) 'So shall my righteousness answer for me'. But when he does not use it for charity it denounces him, as we read in the scriptures (Deut. 19.16) 'to give false evidence against him'.³⁵⁴

Rashi sees this clause as a rebuke to the lazy man referred to in v.18. - 'If there is no money there is no feast, therefore a man will not shrink (יִתְעַצֵּל cf. v.18, where the same root is used בְּעִצְלוֹתָיו) from work, since he has the means whereby to produce (money)'. Rashi, therefore, takes the text in the plain sense and is followed by Ibn Ezra here who explicitly states his understanding of the verb יִעֲבֹד viz. יִמְצִיא 'it furnishes'. Similarly Rashbam.

Luther follows the V rendering³⁵⁵ while AV '... but money answereth all things' follows Rashi; with one or two exceptions the latter is substantially the rendering of most commentators. Montgomery³⁵⁶ translates, '... money concerns all (or everything)', taking ענה as from II ענה 'be occupied', a verb peculiar to Koheleth in Biblical Hebrew. Scott³⁵⁷ follows this, 'but money is everyone's concern' by which he means that 'the rich like all others cannot be entirely carefree in their employment'. This understanding, however, seems dubious.

We conclude that MT was the original text, and that its Hebrew is straightforward. - 'And money provides everything',³⁵⁸ It would seem, though, that the realism of this saying was found offensive to those who felt there should be a pejorative reference to money. This is indicated by ~~וְכָל~~ in LXX B suggesting another understanding, and is confirmed by ~~וְכָל~~ of P, and underlined there by ~~וְכָל~~. The attitude is further demonstrated by the avoidance of the plain sense of the text by T and Midrash Rabbah.

CHAPTER 11 VERSE 9

MT: שמח בחור בילדותיך ויטיבך לבך בימי החורותך והלך בדרכי לבך
וכמוצי עיניך ודע כי על כל אלה יביאך האלהים במשפט

LXX: εὐφραίνου, νεανίσκα, ἐν νεότητί σου, καὶ ἀγαθυνάτω σε ἡ
καρδία σου ἐν ἡμέραις νεότητός σου, καὶ περιπάτει ἐν ὁδοῖς
ἀγαθῆς καὶ μὴ ἐν ὁράσει ὀφθαλμῶν σου· καὶ γινώθι ὅτι ἐκ
πάντων τούτων ἄξει σε ὁ θεὸς ἐν κρίσει

P: *וְשִׂמְחָה בְּחֻרְתְּךָ וְיִטְבֶּה לְבָבְךָ בְּיָמֵי חֻרְתְּךָ
וְהָלַךְ בְּדַרְכֵי לְבָבְךָ וְכִמוֹצֵי עֵינֶיךָ וְדָע כִּי עַל כָּל אֵלֶּה יְבִיאֲךָ הָאֱלֹהִים בְּמִשְׁפֵּט*

V: laetare ergo iuvenis in adulescentia tua et in bono sit
cor tuum in diebus iuventutis tuae et ambula in viis
cordis tui et in intuitu oculorum tuorum et scito quod
pro omnibus his adducet te Deus in iudicium

T: חרי עולימא ביומי עולימתך ויהי לבך טב עלך ביומי רביוותך ואזיל
בעבותותא עם אורחי לבך ותהי זהיר בחזירובי עינך ולא תסתכל
בביש ואשתמודע לך ארום על כל אלין עתיד יי לאעלותך בדינא

This verse is part of a passage 11.7 - 12.8 in which the author warns against the folly of forgetting that when one becomes old it is too late to enjoy life to the full. He is speaking as an old man to young men. It may be that he regrets having misspent his youth, and wishes others to learn from his mistakes, or he may have realised that his age had drained his powers of enjoyment; it may be that he finds he does not want to do as much as he used to do, and that even when he is keen on some project he has not always got the necessary energy.

The vocative בְּנִי 'my son', a device in the wisdom teaching in the Ancient Near East (cf. Prov. 1.8, 10, 15; Ben Sira 2.1; 3.8, 12 etc.) does not occur in the book of Koheleth proper, though it does appear in the Epilogue, in 12.12. The nearest we get to this form of address is this passage, where the person addressed is בְּחֹרֶךְ 'young man'.³⁵⁹

The ב in בְּיָלֻדְךָ may be taken as introducing the object of שמח ; the sense would then be 'Rejoice in (the fact of) your youth'. (cf. Aboth 4.1) But in view of the later בְּיָמֶיךָ בְּחֹרֶךְ (12.1) where it is obviously not the object of זָכַר , it is best taken temporally, i.e. 'when you are young'.

יָלֻדְךָ This is another example of the lateness of Koheleth's Hebrew. The form occurs only three times in the Old Testament, viz. here, v.10 and Ps. 110.3, though in post-

Biblical Hebrew it is found several times.³⁶⁰

בְּחֹרֶת This form, with the ending ^את, is found only in Koheleth - here and in 12.1. In the light of Num. 11.26

בְּחֹרֶת we might expect בְּחֹרֶת but we note that in Jer. 32.30 we find the word בְּעֹרֶת while the same concept in Is. 54.6 is expressed by בְּעֹרֶת. Barton's suggestion³⁶¹ that the Aramaic בְּחֹרֶת - 'youth' may have influenced this form³⁶², and that our word בְּחֹרֶת should perhaps be pointed thus בְּחֹרֶת is therefore unnecessary; the analogy in the Jeremiah passage is sufficient to justify the existing form. Both בְּחֹרֶת and בְּעֹרֶת have a similar meaning, the former perhaps referring to a time of life a little earlier than the latter.

The clause וְהָלַךְ בְּדַרְכֵי לֵבְךָ וּבְמַרְאֵי עֵינֶיךָ brings to mind Num. 15.39 where Moses is told by God to instruct the people '... וְלֹא תִהְיוּ אַחֲרֵי לִבְכֶם וְאַחֲרֵי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם


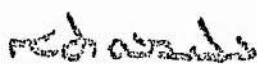

'that you search not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you used to go a whoring'. The injunction of Koheleth is 'gratify your desires, do what you want to do'. (cf. 2.10 where Koheleth declares that this was one of his experiments with life).

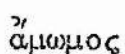
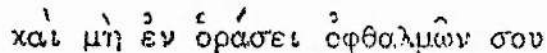
מִרְאָה The Qere is מִרְאָה which occurs in 6.9. C.D. Ginsburg argues³⁶³ that it has been changed here to correspond to the plural דַּרְכֵי. But the plural form does

occur in the Old Testament - Song of Songs 2.14 (twice) and Dan. 1.15, so that we cannot be sure what the original was. LXX and V which have the singular, should not be used to support Qere since it would be natural for the translators to produce the singular in Greek and Latin, but P רַבָּא בְּמִלָּה points to רַבְרַבָּא and T, though plural in the Rabbinic Bible (בְּחַיִּיבֵי), is singular in the editions of Levy³⁶⁴ and Sperber.³⁶⁵ Hence it would seem that the evidence is slightly in favour of the singular, though it should be noted that the sense is not in any way altered.

רַבָּא בְּמִלָּה Delitzsch³⁶⁶ remarks that the same sense would be obtained by רַבִּיב לֵב but Berton³⁶⁷ observes that this pleonastic expression is a sign of the lateness of the Hebrew. LXX and T support MT here. V 'et in bono sit cor tuum' testifies to לֵב but not the verbal suffix, while P וְעַתָּה בְּמִלָּה supports the suffix and not לֵב, but Kamenetzky³⁶⁸ rightly argues, ' לֵב ist vielleicht erst später ausgelassen, weil man בְּמִלָּה neutrisch nahm .' and this would add support to MT. Sym. καὶ ἐν ἀγαθῷ ἔστω and V do not indicate that the translators read another text; rather it would seem that the Hebrew idiom was unsuitable for expression in these languages. The other possibility is that the translators failed to appreciate the thought of the passage, certainly neither Sym. nor V have obtained a satisfactory

translation of the Hebrew thought here. The idea is that the person addressed should enjoy himself and feel cheerful. LXX captures this notion.

 בילדות . . . בימי בחורותיך The LXX and V follow MT here. T has ביומי twice, while the P begins the verse  and does not repeat the idea in any form. While T probably represents the tendency to expand in paraphrase, the Peshitta is another problem. We notice from 11.10 and 12.1 that the Syriac translator rendered בחור as  and ילדות as , hence it would seem that P begins v.9 with בימי בחורותיך , probably because it seemed to the translator that בחור 'young man' was more appropriate to this phrase than to בילדותיך .³⁶⁹ Having therefore begun with בימי בחורותיך in place of בילדותיך the translation proceeded until בימי בחורותיך presented itself again, whereupon the translator, forgetting about the untranslated בילדותיך felt that he had already rendered the phrase before him.

The LXX deviates from MT in two important respects. Following the phrase 'in the ways of your heart', the version adds  'blameless', while for ונמארי עיניך we have  'and not in the sight of your eyes'. Both these divergencies change the colour of the passage completely. Sh represents the former thus

~~ἡ δὲ ὁδὸς ἡ ἑαυτοῦ~~ which probably means that while the LXX text contained the word, the translator felt it was a dubious reading. The negative $\mu\eta$ is not represented in Sh, and it is also omitted by LXX N^{ca} AC, hence it would seem that these deviations do not reflect a Hebrew text other than MT. According to the margin of Sh, Aq., Sym. and Theod. have 'and walk in the ways of your heart', that is, they follow LXX N^{ca} AC.

It is natural that translators and early commentators should have been somewhat embarrassed by this injunction in Scripture, especially in the light of Nu. 15.39. We feel that LXX reflects this attitude in that the translator has deliberately sought to obtain a more orthodox flavour for the passage by inserting the words $\alpha\gamma\alpha\theta\omicron\varsigma$ and $\mu\eta$. The phrases were rightly seen as advocating the gratification of desire, but the additions are tantamount to saying, '... and be pure'.

There is further evidence of this attitude in the Targum. There we read '... and walk in humility with the ways of your heart, and be careful in the seeing of your eyes, and do not look at evil ...'. Again we notice that neither clause has been faithfully rendered. 'And walk in the ways of your heart humbly' is a far cry from the Hebrew of MT, and corresponds to some extent with the interpolation of LXX. The second clause

is hardly recognisable. Not only has the Targumist inserted 'be careful' to alter considerably the meaning of the Hebrew, but the following phrase takes the reconstruction even further - 'and do not look at evil'. The orthodox translator, like that of LXX, has found the thought of the passage offensive and that to such an extent that he was forced to alter the meaning of it.

It is not surprising that the Midrash Rabbah maintains an attitude to this passage similar to that discussed. We read there the comment that 'the sages sought to suppress the book of Koheleth because they discovered there words which tend towards heresy ...'.³⁷⁰ Nu. 15.39 is quoted in part, the implication being that Koheleth seems to contradict it, but the day is saved because the verse ends - 'But know that for all these things God will bring you into judgement', and the comment is יפה אמר שלמה 'Solomon has well said'. This opening paragraph is followed by five parables told by various Rabbis to illustrate that the author's tongue was in his cheek when he penned the first part of 11.9; that his intention was to point out the pointlessness of engaging in this kind of waywardness if, in the end of the day, judgement is certain. For example, 'R. Levi said: "It may be likened to a bird shut up in a cage. Another bird came, stood by it, and said to it, 'Happy are you, for see how your food is

provided for you!' It replied, 'May you be unlucky and unfortunate! You consider my food but pay no attention to my being shut up; tomorrow they will take me out and slay me!' Similarly it is stated, 'But know that for all these ...' "

There follow other interpretations which explain away the first part of the verse. בילדותך i.e. 'in the Torah which you studied in your youth'; במורשתך . . . i.e. the Mishnah'; והלך . . . עיניך 'i.e. the Talmud'.

The cumulative remarks in the Midrash Rabbah indicate that there were already two schools of thought. One held that on account of the final sentence in the verse the first part ceased to be a serious comment of the author. The second, which was, perhaps, not in conflict with the first, tended to feel that the verse was open to misinterpretation unless each phrase in the first part was understood in an orthodox fashion.

Rashi and Ibn Ezra follow the former school. Rashi says that the verse is 'like the man who says to his servant and to his son, "Sin, sin! but you will be punished for everything one time."' Ibn Ezra sees the verse as equivalent to 'Do evil, and see what comes upon you', and concludes his comments by saying that 'the meaning of the verse is like - "... that you do not seek after your heart or after your eyes."' i.e. Nu. 15.39 which is the very passage which Koheleth seeks to question. Rashbam probably follows Rashi's interpretation

here though he does not comment on the verse, merely giving a paraphrase of it.

Luther's translation³⁷¹ of *וְיָדָה לְבָבְךָ לֵבְבְךָ*, '... at heart *hazzak cor tuum*', 'and let your heart to will' is better than the Vulgate's. He goes on to comment that behind the apparent unorthodoxy, Kabeletz wishes to say, 'When the heart is properly intentioned no gaiety or pleasure will do harm ...'. This interpretation is on different lines from the previous ones, but in answer we must point out that the Hebrew phrase does not carry the idea of moral correctness, it is advice to the young man to be merry.³⁷²

Mendelssohn is also concerned about the unorthodox sentiments of Kabeletz and alters the sense of the injunction:

... *וְיָדָה לְבָבְךָ לֵבְבְךָ* *וְיָדָה לְבָבְךָ לֵבְבְךָ*

"... you should be able to walk in the ways of your heart and in the sight of your eyes without sinning."

C.D. Ginsburg criticises those who like Midrash Rabbah, Rashi etc. take this verse as ironical. He feels that this view is untenable in the light of passages such as 2.10, 24; 3.12, 13, 22; 5.18; 6.9; 7.14; 8.15; 9.7ff where present enjoyment is seriously recommended.³⁷³ He claims that the first part of our verse is only in apparent contradiction to the prohibition in Nu. 15.39, and he blames the Midrash Rabbah for giving rise to this 'unnatural interpretation'. This

"apparent contradiction is removed by the fact that two different kinds of pleasure are spoken of in these two places. Moses prohibits illicit gratifications, whilst Koheleth recommends innocent pleasures, which pleasures are to be in harmony with our preparation for a future account of all our doings at the bar of judgement."³⁷⁴ However, we feel that the Hebrew will not permit Ginsburg's interpretation. We must allow that Koheleth had the Numbers passage in mind as he wrote 11.9cd, and consequently that he was consciously calling in question the idea expressed there. Ginsburg and ^{others} are merely avoiding the plain sense of the passage, and are in the same tradition as LXX. If the Hebrew yielded such an interpretation the Rabbis would have recorded it rather than be forced to allegorise.

In 1898 Siegfried, who eventually found nine authors of the book of Koheleth, claimed that a single author could not have been responsible for the entire verse. - "9b (i.e. ... 771) konnte nicht von Verfasser von v.9a geschrieben werden, da er das vollige Gegenteil des eben gegebenen Rates enthielt."³⁷⁵ In the same year Wildeboer airs this viewpoint, which he attributes to Nöldeke and others³⁷⁶, but he rejects it as unnecessary.

However, if Siegfried's suggestion is followed here - that the sentence beginning . . 771 is from the hand of

either an editor or a glossator - the tension in the exegesis of the verse is somewhat relieved. The first part of the verse is to be seen as Koheleth urging young men to make the most of their vigour while it is theirs. He then spells out what he has in mind - 'let your heart and your eyes show you the way' (NCB). The final sentence is the work of someone who feels that the statement requires comment, in fact a blunt contradiction, and he supplies it, thus producing the irony of the verse. It seems, therefore, that the verse as it stands cannot be taken as an unadulterated statement from Koheleth, but as a statement plus comment. This is followed by McNeille and others.³⁷⁷

Gordis, Hertzberg and Barucq, committed to the unity of authorship, are naturally opposed to this interpretation. Hertzberg³⁷⁸ points to the other references in Koheleth to 'judgement', viz. 3.17; 8.5f, holding that the final part of 11.9 is in keeping with these passages. In the case of 3.17 his argument is irrelevant since most scholars assign this verse to a 'glossator' also. The passage 8.5f. is dealing with a different situation entirely; Koheleth is giving advice on how to approach a king, and on how to live as a subject. The לִפְנֵי there referred to is not the לִפְנֵי of God, as in this passage.

Barucq³⁷⁹ also appeals to 3.17. His view is substantially

the same as Hengstenberg, Ginsburg etc. "... Il semble que l'auteur ait simplement voulu signifier que son appel au plaisir n'était pas un appel à la licence, mais ... à jouir honnêtement des biens accordés par Dieu."³⁸⁰

Gordis³⁸¹, taking the 7 of 271 as consecutive, claims that "it introduces the heart of Kabeleth's viewpoint, 'and know ...' i.e. for all the joys which he has extended to you and which it is his will that you enjoy." In support of his position Gordis³⁸² cites a passage in J. Tal. Kiddushin, end - 'Every man must render an account before God of all the good things he beheld in life and did not enjoy.' In answer to this ingenious suggestion we must again point to the Hebrew of the first half of v.9, seen by the Rabbis to savour of heresy (contradicting Nu. 15.39) and to warrant suppression of the book.

MT: והסר כעס מלבבך והעזר לעז טבשרך כי הילדות והשחירות הבלי

LXX: καὶ ἀπόστησον θυμὸν ἀπὸ καρδίας σου, καὶ πάραυτ πονηρίαν
ἀπὸ σαρκός σου, ὅτι ἡ νεότης καὶ ἡ ὄνοια ματαιότης

R: *אָפֿהַר אִירָא מִלֵּבְךָ וְהַעֲזֵר לֵעֵז טַבִּישְׁךָ כִּי הַיְלָדוּת וְהַשְׁחִירוּת הַבְּלִי*
בְּכָל כֹּחַ נְעוּת וְכָל כֹּחַ אִירָא מִלֵּבְךָ וְהַעֲזֵר לֵעֵז טַבִּישְׁךָ כִּי הַיְלָדוּת וְהַשְׁחִירוּת הַבְּלִי

V: .aufer iram a corde tuo et amove malitiam a carne tua
adulescentia enim et voluptas vana sunt

T: ותעזי רגלז מלבבך ולא תגרום ביש על בשרך ארום עולימות ויומי
אויכמות שער הבלי

This verse follows more naturally if we excise the latter half of v.9: it is a continuation of the theme of making the most of one's youth.

The ׀ of ׀׀׀׀ represents the chain of imperatives beginning with ׀׀׀׀ v.9 and ending with ׀׀׀׀ in 12.1, and is not a conjunction introducing consequence 'therefore'.³⁸³ This latter interpretation has arisen because of the interpolation of ׀׀׀׀ . . . ׀׀׀׀ . LXX and Targum represent the ׀ but P and V omit, probably because the translation does not require it.³⁸⁴

׀׀׀׀ With the possible exception of LXX (׀׀׀׀׀׀), the versions translate this word 'anger'. ׀׀׀׀׀׀, although rather ambiguous in the context, can also have this meaning, and, in fact, Sh ~~׀׀׀׀׀׀~~ obviously felt that this was how LXX understood the Hebrew. In Biblical Hebrew ׀׀׀׀ may have this meaning, e.g. Prov. 21.19 etc., but it can also mean 'grief', e.g. Ps. 6.8 etc. It may be that the rendering of the versions is again due to the interpolation in v.9 suggesting a moralising tone in the passage. The word ׀׀׀׀ which also appears in this verse, is open to this same moralising interpretation (see below).

Midrash Rabbah, which connects this verse with 12.1, makes the comment

א"ר לוי כל טילורי סיורי וכל סיורי טפשי

'R. Levi said, "All rags are ill-smells, and all ill-smells are

foolish,"', which Jastrow takes to mean, 'All insignificant persons are quarrelsome, and all quarrelsome people are foolish.'³⁸⁵ This would appear to be a remark on **עצ** and would suggest that he who possessed **עצ** was a quarrelsome person, that is to say **עצ** is provocation. Rashi interprets the word in this way, as that which gives occasion for anger in God, **דברים המכעיסים את המקום** 'things which provoke the Lord' and is therefore in the same tradition as the versions, as are also Rashbam and Luther.³⁸⁶

AV - 'Therefore remove sorrow ...' breaks this tradition and is followed by Ginsburg³⁸⁷ and others.³⁸⁸ Hengstenberg³⁸⁹ and NAB (discontent), JB (worry), Scott³⁹⁰ (care) vary slightly from this rendering, but the translations of the versions are not followed by modern scholars. In the light of the encouragement given to the young man to enjoy life, we feel that the translation 'sorrow, grief' or 'care' is more appropriate than 'anger'.

— **והעבר רעה מבשרך** This clause is parallel to the first, hence each will be interpreted in the light of the other. It is likely that **רעה** and **כעס**, being parallel to each other, and following upon the interpolated sentence in v.9, have received a content in interpretation altogether foreign to what was originally intended.

רעה may either have the meaning 'evil', in the sense

of ethical evil (1 Sam. 12.17; Jer. 2.19), or in the sense of trouble, calamity, misery, injury (Jer. 44.17; Prov. 22.3 etc). This latter sense is what is required in this passage.

LXX has taken רעה in the ethical sense, as has V 'malitiam'. P and T, like the Hebrew רעה, can be taken either way, but considering the way they view the rest of the verse it is likely that the translators had the same idea in mind as that of LXX and V. Rashi takes רעה to mean יצר הרע 'the evil inclination'³⁹¹, and Luther³⁹² 'malicia' follows in the same vein. The advice is seen as that of setting aside of evil intention and practices. Ginsburg disagrees³⁹³, and is followed by others.³⁹⁴

והעבר This verb can mean 'put away, remove', but here it probably means 'keep away (from)'.³⁹⁵ The instruction in this clause is then to keep misery, calamity, distress, injury away from the body. (בשר is parallel to גוף in the first clause and must have the meaning 'body' as in Eccles. 12.12; Prov. 5.11; Job. 4.15 etc.) The combined ideas of both clauses urge the young man to free himself from things which prevent him enjoying life as outlined in v.9.

והשחרות, a Hapax legomenon, was a stumbling block to the versions. LXX has καὶ ἡ ἀνομία '... and folly', and the P rendering וְהַיְסוּדָה 'and ignorance' is another example of where LXX and P are related.³⁹⁶ V 'et voluptas' -

'and pleasure, desire' indicates that Jerome was dissatisfied with the rendering of LXX and possibly took it from שָׁחַר 'to seek'.³⁹⁷ What is true of all three, however, is that the clause has been considered to be a slight on 'youth'. For the LXX translator 'folly' seemed to be a good parallel to 'youth', while 'pleasure' seemed to Jerome to be appropriate.

T וַיִּזְמַן אוֹכְמוֹת שָׁחַר .. and the time of black hair ..' has taken the word to be an abstract noun from שָׁחַר 'to be black'. In this connection we might note Lev. 13.31, 37 where the adjective שָׁחַר is applied to 'hair', and more especially S. Tal., nedarim 30b, where the phrase שָׁחַרֵי הָרֹאשׁ 'black-headed' is in contrast with קַרְחִין 'bald' and בָּעֲלֵי שֵׁיבֹת 'grey-haired'. In this latter reference the phrase must have the meaning 'early manhood' and this is probably the meaning desiderated in the final clause of v.10. We note also that the root appears in the phrase בֶּן תַּשְׁחֹרֶת in Midrash Rabbah on Lam. 1.2, which probably means 'a grown-up son'³⁹⁸, and where the comment below it (וְעַרְוֵן בְּשָׁנִים) is 'a lad of tender years', and the phrase in Eccles. 11.10 is cited as being related to it.

Rashi equates the word with בְּעָרְוֶת 'youth' and adds 'for the head of a man is black (שָׁחַר) in the days of his youth', and so follows the T. Ibn Ezra is not so certain; he mentions that the word may hint at black hair, and cites

Song of Songs 1.5 שחרור אג' וזארה , but he seems to be more convinced that the word is connected with שחר 'dawn', and although he does not explicitly say so we assume he means 'dawn of life' i.e. 'youth'. Rashbam and Mendelsson follow T. Luther merely translates 'adulescentia' without explanation;³⁹⁹ so also AV 'youth'. Hengstenberg follows Ibn Ezra's 'dawn of life'⁴⁰⁰, but Ginsburg argues against this interpretation, "... this would describe early childhood, which cannot be meant here, being incompatible with cares and anxieties."⁴⁰¹ He takes שחרור as from שחר 'to be black'. "This derivation shows more definitely the distinction between שחרור and שחרות ; the former means 'youth', the latter 'manhood'."⁴⁰² Most scholars follow T's understanding of the term⁴⁰³, but Siegfried⁴⁰⁴ and RSV prefer the 'dawn of life' derivation.

הכל If this word is translated 'emptiness, futility' - a meaning which is characteristic of Koheleth - then the clause is suspect. Koheleth has urged young men to delight in their youth, and has suggested that anything in mind or body which interferes with this should be shunned. If the author continues '... for youth and manhood are emptiness' then he renders his previous advice void and meaningless. In the light of this Galling has argued rightly that this clause is not the work of Koheleth but that of a glossator.⁴⁰⁵

It has been argued that this is not necessary⁴⁰⁶; that in this clause לַנַּחַשׁ has its primary meaning, i.e. 'breath, vapour', and the sense is that youth and manhood are short-lived, ephemeral; that there is no trace here of a slight upon youth or manhood. Koheleth advises enjoyment in one's youth because that period in one's life is all too short. [This same notion appears in 12.1 with the words '... before troubled times come ...'.⁴⁰⁷

But it is not likely that Koheleth would take a key word like לַנַּחַשׁ, which is used throughout the book in its secondary sense, and give it the primary meaning here. To convey the idea that youth is fleeting he might have used the word with the preposition בְּ, or, as in the case of Ps. 144.4, with the verb נָחַשׁ and the preposition בְּ. It would then have been apparent that לַנַּחַשׁ in the sense of 'breath' was intended. But as it stands the word must surely keep the meaning given to it throughout the book.⁴⁰⁸

LXX παραλόγη cannot be taken in any sense other than 'purposelessness'; nor can V 'vana'. And although it is theoretically possible to translate P ~~לַנַּחַשׁ~~ and T לַנַּחַשׁ in the primary sense of 'breath, vapour', yet it is not likely that either translator had this meaning in mind; their treatment of the rest of the clause is evidence of this.

In fact it is not until AV takes סוֹד as 'sorrow'

that scholars show willingness to interpret לָנָא as 'fleeting'. To-day most commentators are prepared to translate it thus. We feel, however, that the versions have rendered correctly and that the problem lies in the text itself. It is true that translated as 'fleeting' the sense is good but it is our view that the sense intended by the author of the clause was in contradiction with the idea expressed in v.9, that youth is a time of opportunity. We, therefore, reject it with Galling as a gloss which was originally meant to refer to v.9 along with the other gloss there incorporated, but was written into the text at this point.

JB '... yet youth, the age of dark hair is vanity' and NEB '... boyhood and the prime of life are mere emptiness', do not, of course, indicate that the translators considered the clause to be a gloss but their renderings are in line with Galling, who has taken the next step, viz. that of deletion - the only logical one.

CHAPTER 12 VERSE 1

MT: וְכָכָה אַתְּ בִּירְאִי בְּיָמֵי חַיֵּיךָ עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִבְאֶה יָמִי הַהוּא וְיִגְדִּיעַ
 עֲשֵׂה מִכָּל הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֵין בְּיָדְךָ וְעַד עֲשֵׂה

LXX: καὶ μνήσθητι τοῦ κτίσαντός σε ἐν ἡμέραις νεότητός σου, ὥς
 ὅτου μὴ ἔλθωσιν αἱ ἡμέραι τῆς κακίας, καὶ φθάσουσιν ἔτη
 ἐν οἷς ἐρεῖς οὐκ ἔστιν μοι ἐν αὐτοῖς θέλημα.

F: רַחֵם הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַפְשִׁי וְיָצֵא מִיָּדַי
 אֶת־כָּל־רָעָה וְיִשְׁלַח מִיָּדִי
 כָּל־רָעָה וְיִשְׁלַח מִיָּדִי

V: memento creatoris tui in diebus iuventutis tuae antequam
 veniat tempus afflictionis et adpropinquent anni de
 quibus dicas non mihi placent

T: וְחַיֵּי וְכִכָּה יֵת בְּיָמֶיךָ לִיקְדוּתֶיהָ בְּיָמֵי וְיִבְיֹתֶךָ עַד דְּלֹא יִיתֹן לְוִיתֶךָ
 יָמֵי בִישׁוֹת וְיִמְסֹן עֲלֶיךָ שְׁבִין דְּתִימָר לִית בְּהֹן וְעוֹא

וְזָכַר אֶת בְּרֵאשִׁית יָמָיו בְּהוֹרָתוֹ This clause is straight-
 forward enough as far as grammar is concerned, but with regard
 to its suitability in the context there has been much debate.
 In form it belongs to the series of imperatives joined by וְ ,
 beginning with 11.9, but, as we have observed, the advice
 throughout has been that of enjoying what life offers. The
 thought of this clause does not belong here: it advocates
 action which breaks the thought of the passage as a whole.
 Consequently, many have seen here the work of a pious glossator,
 and delete accordingly.⁴⁰⁹ The attempt by Gordis⁴¹⁰ to see in
 this passage a continuation of the theme expressed in the
 previous verses, is unconvincing. Old Testament usage is
 against interpreting this clause to mean 'rejoice ..'. The
 verb זָכַר in the imperative, used frequently in the Old
 Testament, is generally employed in a context where the person
 addressed is asked to think seriously about something important,
 such as the commandments of God (Num. 15.39), God himself
 (Deut. 8.18) and even about events in the future (Eccles. 11.8).
 The idea is therefore not always remembrance in the sense that
 the person has actually forgotten something, though it is
 employed in this sense also. (i.e. opposite to נָשָׁח 'to
 forget') In this verse it is used as in Deut. 8.18, in the
 sense of 'recall' or 'keep in mind', and the injunction is 'Keep
 your Creator in mind when you are young'. The implication of

this is probably spelled out for us in the paraphrase of the Targum - וְחָתֵי דְמִינֵי יֵת בְּרִיךְ לִיקְרוֹמֵיהּ 'And remember your Creator to honour him ...'.

The Masoretes cannot have understood these verses as Gordis wants us to understand them, otherwise the chapter would have begun with 11.9. The fact that they divided the text at this point is evidence that they saw here a decided break in the thought sequence.

The remainder of this section - i.e. ending at v.8 - is an allegory of approaching old age, depicting the increasing physical symptoms, and concludes, '[Everything is futile]'. It does not follow naturally upon the injunction to remember one's Creator when young. What we expect is 'Rejoice before old age creeps on'. Hence we conclude that this clause is an interpolation, along with the final phrase of 11.10, and that the original Hebrew was

וְהָסֵר כַּעַס מִלִּבְךָ וְהַעֲבֹר רָעָה מִבֶּטְרְךָ

עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִבְאֵר יְמֵי הָרָעָה

וְיִרְאֵיךְ MT is attested by all the versions. The fact that their translations are in the singular is not an argument against the spelling here with a yod. The plural spelling, being generally explained as the plural of majesty⁴¹¹, is not unusual in the Old Testament in appellations of 'God'.⁴¹² Koheleth Rabbah (ad loc.) and Leviticus Rabbah (ch. 18) have the singular here, along with J. Tal. Sotah 2, and as a result

Euringer⁴¹³ wishes to delete the yod; but it should be noted that 2. Tal. Shabbath 151b testifies to the plural spelling. The 'difficilior lectio' is to be preferred here; the spelling with the yod.

Some scholars have tried to retain the entire clause by amending the text, and see the problem in the word בוראִיךְ . Since Koheleth, when referring to God, always uses the term אלהים , the appellation 'Creator' at this late stage and without apparent reason is puzzling.

Akabiah b. Mahaleel, whose dates are uncertain, but who may have lived as early as 30 B.C., is quoted in Midrash Rabbah as having said, 'Keep in view ... from whence you came - from a fetid drop; where you are going - to a place of dust, worm and maggot; and before whom you shall give an account and reckoning - before the King of the king of kings, the Holy One, blessed is He.' This quotation is also found in Leviticus Rabbah, ch. 18 and in Aboth 3.1 where the full preamble is given - 'Keep in view three things and you will not come under the power of sin: from whence ...' Koheleth Rabbah proceeds to cite a quotation from J. Tal. Sotah 2 where R' Joshua b. Levi of Sikinim states, 'Akabiah derived three things from one word .. בוראִיךְ , באִיךְ , בורךְ - בורךְ : this is the malodorous secretion, באִיךְ : this is worm and maggot, בוראִיךְ : this is the King of the king of kings before whom you shall

give account and reckoning ...' (In Leviticus Rabbah the order of these words is different: נֶאֱמַר refers to the seminal fluid, and נֶאֱמַר to worm and maggot. J. Tal. Sotah is in line with Leviticus Rabbah. We note also that Akabiah's comments are quoted in Rashi on 12.1.)

The point of this observation is to indicate that this Midrashic exegesis of Akabiah is the source of one or two of the suggested emendations.⁴¹⁴

Ehrlich's emendation בְּרִיאַת 'well-being' has been followed only by H.L. Ginsberg⁴¹⁵ who translates it 'vigour'. The reason it has not been followed is because the word is unknown in the Old Testament - the Modern Hebrew בְּרִיאַת being the nearest we get to it. Graetz⁴¹⁶ has suggested either בְּרִיאַת or בְּרִיאַת referring to Proverbs 5.15 where both words appear and where the meaning 'your cistern, spring' is used figuratively for 'your wife'. (cf. Prov. 5.18) But this emendation and interpretation has not generally commended itself to scholars. 'Remember your cistern' is no advance on MT; it is too specific an injunction for what follows and there is no reference to it later in the passage. In fact at the end of the section בְּרִיאַת 'the well' appears in a concrete sense and makes the figurative use of the same word in the same context unlikely.

Scott amends to 7771, understanding it as figurative for 'grave'⁴¹⁷; he was probably influenced by the fact that the rest of the passage has to do with old age and death. But 'remember your grave in the days of your youth ..' is just as inappropriate here as 'remember your Creator'. Kheleth has just said 'remove anxiety from your mind'; he has just advocated a carefree existence, and is unlikely to burden the mind of the young man with allusions to his grave. True, he does proceed at length about approaching old age, and this ends up with a reference to death, v.5f., but in this first verse the injunction is to remember you? when young, before the time you cannot enjoy comes along, and the object of 'remember' can hardly be 'your grave'. Consequently we reject these emendations with Gordis, Hertzberg and Zimmerli.⁴¹⁸

Galling deletes the entire phrase.⁴¹⁹ For him, the passage beginning at 11.9 has been heavily glossed, the original Hebrew being what we have suggested above.

Those who hold the authenticity of the clause and retain the translation 'Creator'⁴²⁰ vary with regard to the implied meaning here. For example Gordis feels that to remember one's creator is to consider why one was created, which was in order to enjoy life, while Ginsburg is forced to the position where a pious exhortation such as this one, is not considered to be an intrusion in the passage.

עד אשר לא יכארו ימי הרעה . This phrase עד אשר לא
(cf. also 12.2) as Barton observes⁴²¹, is close to the
Mishnaic idiom עד שלא⁴²² . In Prov. 8.26 we find the
phrase עד לא which has the same meaning, viz. 'before'.
This is a further indication of the lateness of the Hebrew of
Koheleth, approximating as it does to that of the Mishnah.

LXX. ἕως ὅτου μὴ merely renders MT word for word, while
Sym. gives the required meaning ἔμπροσθεν 'before', as does
Vulgate 'antequam', P, whose compound ἕως ὅτου exactly corres-
ponds to the Hebrew עד לא, and Targum עד דלא - the
Aramaic equivalent of the Mishnaic phrase - are also correct
renderings.

ימי הרעה : רעה should be taken not as ethical
evil but, as in 11.10, misery, trouble, pain. This time LXX

τῆς κακίας renders correctly (cf. 11.10; cf. also Sym.

τῆς κακώσεώς σου and V 'afflictionis'. P and T also
follow this understanding of the word.) It is likely that
'the time of trouble' refers to the time of old age as
suggested by Rashi who says that the latter is a time of
weakness. Rashi is followed by Rashbam here. Ibn Ezra says
that for an old man it is a time of old age, while for someone
with a terminal disease it is the time of illness.

The next clause is parallel to the previous one. With

! in והגיעה we understand the prepositional phrase

עד אשר לא again, i.e. '... and before the years draw near ...'

אשר תאמר : אשר following words denoting time may have the meaning 'when'.⁴²³ LXX ἐν οἷς ἐρεῖς is not an indication that the translator had a reading אשר , but is rather an interpretation of אשר i.e. 'in which' - 'when'. This is followed by AV, RSV, JB, Scott⁴²⁴ and NAB. The Vulgate - 'de quibus dicas' 'of which you will say' has been followed by Luther⁴²⁵ and by most other scholars, and has a near parallel in 1.10 שיאמר . while the meaning is not greatly affected whichever translation is given, the latter is to be preferred. Apart from the fact that T and P cannot be rendered 'when you will say', we have ימי parallel with שנים , and הרעה parallel with the words which follow שנים . It is therefore a description of the years that is desiderated here, i.e. 'of which you will say ...'.

בהם : we might expect בהן here since שנים is a feminine noun but this disagreement in gender is not uncommon, cf. 2.6; 11.8 where the same phenomenon occurs.

אין לי בהם חפץ : LXX, P and T render 'I have no pleasure in them'. V 'non mihi placent - they do not please me' is not a witness to another text but rather the translator's way of rendering the same text in Latin.

It should be noted, however, that the word $\gamma\omega\eta$ does not always have the meaning 'pleasure'. W.F. Staples argues⁴²⁶ that the word has lost this meaning by the time of Koheleth. He points to examples in Prov. 3.15; 8.11 where 'the plural is used of "desirable things"' and argues that this is a sense midway between 'pleasure' and 'affair' which, in turn, is a meaning close to the Mishnaic 'thing'.⁴²⁷ (cf. Rashi on 3.1. כל הדברים קרובים תפוצים וכלם נמשכים

'Every case of ענין is called תפוצה in the language of the Mishnah'.

There is no doubt that a development did take place with $\gamma\omega\eta$ ⁴²⁸ as Staples says, but while this is true, there is no grounds for ruling out the possibility that at the time Koheleth wrote, the meaning 'delight, pleasure' had ceased to attach to the word. In 3.1 and 3.17 $\gamma\omega\eta$ means 'affair, business' but in 5.3 and 12.1 this meaning is unsuitable. Further, the fact that the Versions LXX, V, P and T take the meaning as 'pleasure' is surely an indication that the word could still have that sense. (cf. LXX on 3.1 and 5.3 where $\kappa\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\eta\mu\alpha$ and $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta\mu\alpha$ are used respectively, demonstrating that the Greek translator was au fait with the translation possibilities of the word.) Again, in the context where Koheleth is urging the young to enjoy life before age snuffs out the possibility of doing so, the clause

'I have no pleasure in them' is more appropriate than 'I have no work to do in them'.⁴²⁹ Gallinger's translation '... sie sind mir nichts nutze',⁴³⁰ 'they are of no use to me', and NCB 'I see no purpose in them' are in the same category as this latter interpretation. It is true that Aq. was unhappy with LXX and rendered οὐκ ἔστιν (μοι) ἐν αὐτοῖς κρῖνον 'there is nothing important in them (for me)' taking γὰρ as in 3.1, but this statement is irrelevant. Sym. also renders differently οὐ χρῆζω αὐτῶν 'I do not need them' but this is to be rejected for the same reason.

11) THE COMMENTARY ON KOHELETH BY RASHI

SAMUEL BEN MEIR

1) Introduction

Rabbi Samuel ben Meir, or Rashbam¹ as he is often called, was born in Rameru in Northern France about 1060 A.D. and died after 1158.² He was the son of Rashi's daughter Jochanted, and the brother of Jacob ben Meir (Rabbeinu Tam). He was also a pupil of Rashi.³

Rashbam was first and foremost an Old Testament exegeta, writing commentaries and notes on the Pentateuch, Judges, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the twelve Minor Prophets, Ezra-Nehemiah, the Five Megilloth, Psalms and Job; but he also wrote on Baba Bathra, Pesachim, Abodah Zarah, Niddah and Aboth, though it is said that he was weak as a Talmudist.⁴

Having been taught by the renowned Rashi it might have been expected that he would disseminate the views and teaching of the latter in whatever he wrote, but this was not the case; Rashbam possessed a very independent mind. This is not to

say that his writings do not reveal the influence of Rashi; on the contrary it is to some extent due to his grandfather that Rashbam came to stand out as a biblical exegete. Before the time of Rashi (1040-1135) biblical exegesis among Jews had been dominated by two systems: halachic⁵ and haggadic.⁶ Rashi added a third: the literal or peshat. Rashbam's greatness lies in the fact that he latched on to this method of exegesis and saw that biblical exegesis, so far from being able to do without it, was of no consequence without it. Whereas Rashi did not break with tradition, in that his literal exegesis lies side by side with the halachic and haggadic methods, Rashbam pointed out the inconsistency of this approach and while reverent in theory to authority, in practice he was independent. It should be pointed out, however, that his insistence on the literal meaning of the biblical text is not everywhere evident in his writings. He began on the same lines as Rashi, that is, combining the haggadic and halachic with the peshat. His preference for the peshat became more and more evident, however, and reached its climax in his commentary on *Koneleth* which is remarkably free from haggadah. While he retained great respect for his grandfather, he did not hesitate on occasion to oppose him, as for example on Genesis 49.10. In an oft quoted passage he indicates that Rashi in his later years was convinced that he (Rashbam) had

adopted the correct approach.

"And also Rabbi Solomon, (Rashi) by maternal grandfather, the Enlightener of the eyes of the Exile, who commented on the Pentateuch, prophets and Hagiographa, set himself to expound the literal meaning of scripture. And even I, Samuel son of Meir his son-in-law argued with him and before him, and he confessed to me that had he had the opportunity, he would have found it necessary to write other commentaries, more in accordance with the literal expositions, of which new examples come up every day."⁸

Since he occupies such a key position in the history of exegesis, being regarded by later generations as a 'king of interpreters'⁹, and since his commentary on Kohaleth is probably his best work¹⁰, it has been felt appropriate to translate and edit it here.

The commentary

The text of the manuscript used by Jellinek is in the Mediaeval script¹¹ although the square script generally appears when Rashbam is quoting the Hebrew text of Kohaleth.

His method is to quote the Hebrew text, either the opening words of a sentence which is to be discussed or the actual words to be commented upon, and then to discuss it.

On the passages 1.1,2,3 he begins with the opening words of the verse before he starts to comment -

1.1 דברי קהלת

1.2 דבר הגלים אמר

1.5 מה יתרון

At other times he prefers to select, from the verse in question, the actual words which are to be discussed, and to place them at the beginning before commenting upon them - e.g. at 1.7 where he opens with והים אנגור מלא and not the opening words of the verse; again, at 1.14 where the first words quoted are the final words of the passage, viz. רצות רוח, and at 1.17 where he opens with the problematic ודעת. Yet again, he sometimes begins his exegesis of the passage without first of all quoting from the Hebrew text of Koheloth, as, for example, at 1.10, 13.

As might be expected Rashbam employs plene spelling throughout, and this applies even when he is quoting the Biblical text

e.g. at 8.12 - שכרות ולא מיין (Isaiah 51.21)

MT שכרות ולא מיין

at 10.9 ויסעו אנבים גדולות (I Kings 5.31)

MT ויסעו אנבים גדולות

and at 1.2 כי הנה איביך ה' כי הנה אויביך (Psalms 92.10)

MT כי הנה איביך יהוה כי הנה איביך

It is interesting to note that even when he cites the Hebrew text of Koheleth in square characters plene spelling is also employed.

e.g. at 1.4

דור הולך ודור בא

ד

דור הלך ודור בא

and at 11.4

שומר רוח

ד

שמר רוח

The Tetragrammaton never appears in Rabbinical writings; it is represented by an abbreviation. As far as the text of Koheleth is concerned the problem did not arise for Rashbam since the word for 'God' there is always אלהים or האלהים, but when he quotes other scripture the name YHWH is represented by ¹²ה' or ¹²יהוה, והשם. The term is usually handled by the Rabbis by means of the abbreviation ¹³הקב"ה, but Rashbam uses this only twice.¹⁴ His preference is for the shorter form, viz. ¹⁵הק' which he employs well over sixty times, though he is not confined to this. On a number of occasions the term ¹⁶השמים (or שמים) appears, while occasionally ¹⁷האלקים (or אלקים) occurs.

Rashbam initiates the literary criticism of the book of Ecclesiastes when he implies that the entire book cannot have been written by the one person. He points out in his comments on 1.2 that the first two verses are not the work of Koheleth but that of an editor.

".... Koheleth did not say these two verses, viz. those beginning with הבול הגלים and דברתי קהלת; it was the person who arranged the sayings as they are." Again, he observes in his comments on 12.6 that the book properly ends with 12.7, although here it should be noted that he speaks of a plurality of editors.¹⁸ "Now the book is finished. It is the editors who speak from now on, saying: [Everything in the world which is done in the world, is utterly futile, said Koheleth". But while these observations are generally accepted by scholars today it is interesting to note that they were ignored for centuries. Ibn Ezra, Sfornc and Mendlesohn do not even refer to them far less adopt them. In fact 'modern' literary criticism of the book of Koheleth takes its starting point not from Rashbam's observations but from the literary criticism of the Pentateuch.

His style is simple and direct;¹⁹ he seldom wastes words. A good example of this is at 1.16; he simply uses the French pensai mi (I thought) to explain the opening words דברתי

אני עם לבי, and follows this by elucidating the phrases לפני and על כל, לאמר in their contexts in a most concise and straightforward manner. " דברתי אני עם לבי . i.e. 'pensai-mi' in French. לאמר . i.e. and so I said.

על כל . i.e. more than all the wise men who were before me in Jerusalem, before I was born." With a minimum of words

he has given a clear interpretation of the passage. A further example is to be found in the fact that Rashbam does not feel the need to comment upon everything in the text. At 2.6 he comments only upon the word צומח , while at 6.1 the only comment is upon the words ורבה היא . This is further illustrated by referring to his treatment of 3.2-8:-

" עת ללדת . On one occasion one is born, or another one dies. 'A time to plant', that is, in time of peace; 'a time to uproot', that is, in time of war. Thus all these 'times' are included in 'a time of war and a time of peace', that is, with the exception of a 'time to be born' and 'a time to be silent and a time to speak',²⁰ according to the plain sense of the passage. It is therefore written at the end as if to say: This is the general rule - a time of war and a time of peace."²¹

Not only does Rashbam refrain from commenting upon everything in a verse, but he does not feel compelled to explain each individual verse. His approach here may be contrasted with that of Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Mendlessohn (who tend to treat each part of a verse) and especially with Midrash Rabbah which is very elaborate on this section (3.2-8).

Throughout the commentary Rashbam reveals his deep interest in the whole corpus of the Hebrew Scriptures, with his numerous Biblical references.²² Although he seldom cites the passage in question by making reference to book, chapter and verse²³, he quotes from Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Malachi. His use of Scripture indicates his belief that the book of Koheleth is part of the corpus of scripture and reflects the style, language and ideas already present in the earlier biblical books. Thus at 1.2 he quotes Psalms 92.10; 93.3 and 115.1 as illustrative of the style of the passage under discussion, viz. הבל הנלים אמר

קהלת הבל הנלים . Again at 8.12, where he finds that מאת is in the construct state but that the word with which it is associated - either ימים or שנים - is missing, he points out that this has a parallel in Isaiah 51.21 in

שכורת ולא מיין where שכורת is construct with a word which is missing. Frequently his intimate knowledge of Hebrew usage and forms comes to the fore when he cites other biblical passages to assist in his explanation of the word or phrase in question. Hence at 9.1 he not only glosses ביד with a French phrase but is able to cite no less than three examples in scripture where the sense of יד is similar

(Exod. 3.8; 18.10; Deut. 7.18). Again at 2.9, where the meaning 'prepare' (for עשה) is supported by referring to a similar usage of עשה in Gen. 18.8 and Deut. 21.12. The problematic ויעת in 1.17 Rashbam takes to be the infinitive construct and cites I Chron. 12.33 in support, where דעת without the ל must be the infinitive. His knowledge of the Scriptures is further confirmed in his observation on the verb אמר in 7.27. Having acknowledged that it is curious to find קהלת with a feminine verb, he points out that דוד is constructed with a feminine verb in the text ויחלל דוד לצאת (II Sam. 13.39) and that both passages may be resolved by understanding the subject of the feminine verbs to be the נפש of Koheleth and the נפש of David respectively. The explanation - taken possibly from the construction בקשה נפשי in the next verse - may not be acceptable to modern scholarship, but only someone who was thoroughly acquainted with the Hebrew Scriptures could treat this problem in the way Rashbam has done. He would, however, have been less than satisfied if he had only been able to show that the language and style of Koheleth had connections with the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures. He finds that ideas expressed by Koheleth have echoes elsewhere in the Scriptures. Hence he points out that the comparison of reputation with oil is also to be found in Song of Songs 1.3. Further, he supposes that the statement (7.1) that the day

a man dies is better than the day on which he was born, is connected in thought with Job. 5.7 which states that man is born for toil. Again, at 7.7 he points out that the fact that wisdom is called a gift is in accordance with the verse of scripture which states that the Lord gives wisdom (Prov. 2.6).

One of the characteristics of early and indeed mediaeval Rabbinic exegesis is that a passage may be interpreted out of context. Although Rashbam in his commentary on Koheleth does not explicitly oppose this method, his interest in obtaining the plain sense of a passage militates against it. This is evident from the many examples where he links one passage with another. Recognising that the statement in 1.3 - "What advantage has a man in exchange for all his toil ..." - is basic to the opening section of the book, Rashbam refers back to it on no less than six occasions (1.6,7,11 his; 2.11,15). The connection which he sees between these passages and 1.3 is not superficial; for him they are connected because they too express the מה יתרון of 1.3. For example, when speaking of the continual movement of the sun (1.6) he contrasts it with the shortness of man's existence, and comments, "thus it is said: What advantage has a man ...?" Again at 1.7 the ever-flowing rivers are set over against man's short passage through the world, and the

statement is made: "Everything refers back to: What advantage has a man ...?" At 1.11 also Rashbam begins by stating, "This relates to: What advantage has a man ...?", where the theme is that a man is not remembered by those who follow him. In fact Rashbam interprets the whole of the prologue as being a series of illustrations of the *ספר יצרון* of v.3, and this in itself is sufficient to demonstrate his pioneer qualities as an exegete, since Rashi and Ibn Ezra tend to be restricted to a method of isolated exegesis. Even Mendlesohn, in the 18th century, does not rise to the heights of Rashbam here. The latter's interest in linking passages together and of seeing recurring themes throughout the book is shown by the fact that on at least thirty occasions he refers to another passage in Koheleth. These are to be found at 1.3,6,7,11,17; 2.3,9,11,15,18,22; 3.9,12,21; 4.10; 5.6,11,17; 6.4; 7.7,19,20,26; 8.6,10,16; 10.7,10.

Rashbam's interest in the plain sense of a text is paralleled by his lack of interest in fanciful interpretation, and this in turn is reflected in the paucity of Talmudic quotations in his commentary. Since he was interested in preserving traditional interpretations only where they were in agreement with the literal sense²⁴, he was naturally restricted in his use of the Talmud²⁵, and his exegesis in this commentary, almost entirely free from midrashic type exegesis, is quite

unique for his time. To illustrate this, Rashban's method might be compared with that of Rashi, the Targumist and the Midrashic exegetes.

e.g. 1.3.

Targum: "What advantage has a man after he dies from all the toil in which he engaged under the sun in this world, except he studied in the law with a view to receiving a perfect reward in the world to come from the Lord of the world?"

Midrash Rabbah: "... R. Benjamin said: The wise men tried to exclude the book of Koheleth because they found there heretical sayings. They stated: Solomon's wisdom in this book is summed up by, 'What advantage has a man in exchange for all his toil ...?' The words might apply to a man's toil in the law. After deliberation they said: He did not say 'of all toil' but 'of all his toil'. One should not engage in one's own toil, but one should engage in the toil of the law.

..... R. Huna and R. Aha said in the name of R. Hilfai: A man's toil is under the sun, but his treasury of reward is above the sun. R. Judan said: Under the sun he has no advantage, but he has it above the sun ..."

Rashi: " מה יתרון i.e. reward or advantage.

תחת השמש : i.e. in exchange for the law -
the law is called light in Prov. 6. Any toil
for which a man may give up the study of the
law - what reward is there in it?"

Rashbam: מה יתרון . All these words are related
to the statement below - "There is nothing
better for a man than to eat and drink etc."
(2.24). That is to say all the efforts of a
man are futile, and nothing will benefit him
more than to drink and to be happy with his
lot. מה יתרון i.e. What reward or gain
has a man in return for all the work in which
he engages under the sun, since in the end he
passes away and ceases from the world and
does not return. On this interpretation the
word is used in its usual sense. תחת השמש .
He uses this expression because no one may
hide from the heat of the sun; it is the same
as if he had written 'under the heavens'.

There is no doubt which is the best treatment of the passage.
The Targum, Midrash Rabbah and Rashi indulge in fanciful
interpretation and are concerned to remove the sceptical
nature of the statement. The 'heresy' to which Midrash Rabbah

alludes is removed by the Rabbis by dubious exegesis of

עמלך and תחת השמש ; the Targum introduces 'the world to come' and thus creates a completely new statement, while Rashi's interpretation of 'under the sun' is more fanciful than even the Midrash. All three are concerned that the study of the Torah should not appear to be criticised, and they order their exegesis accordingly. Rashbam's exegesis, however, stands on its own. To begin with he links the passage with 2.24 which demonstrates immediately that he recognises the scepticism of the verse and has noticed scepticism elsewhere in the book. It further shows that he does not wish to interpret anything out of context, and this is seen also in his use of הנל (cf. v.2) to describe man's efforts. There is no trace of 'the world to come' or of a

יתרון other than of this world, and the phrase 'under the sun' is handled in an interesting manner.

1.12

Targum: "When Solomon the King was upon his royal throne he became proud of his riches and rebelled against the word of the Lord. He acquired many horses, chariots and horsemen, amassed much silver and gold and married foreign women. So the anger of the Lord was kindled against him and he sent Ashm'day, the king of the demons to

him. He banished him from his royal throne and took the ring from his hand, so that he might wander and roam around in the world to reprove it. He went around the towns of the district and the cities of Israel weeping and mourning and saying: I am Koheleth, whose name was formerly Solomon who was King over Israel in Jerusalem."

Midrash Rabbah: ".... I was important when I was King, but now I am nobody. R. Hanina b. Isaac said: When I was King I was important but now I am not worth anything. He experienced three worlds during his life. On this statement R. Judan and R. Oniah comment. R. Judan said: He had been King, commoner, and again King; wise, foolish, and again wise; rich, poor, and again rich. The proof is in the verse: "I have experienced everything in my futile time" (7.15). A man does not speak of his poverty until he has returned to prosperity. R. Oniah said: He was commoner, King, and again commoner; foolish, wise, and again foolish; poor, rich, and again poor. The proof is in the verse 'I was King ...' "

Rashi: "I Koheleth, was King, i.e. over all the world, later over Israel only, later over Jerusalem only, and finally over my staff only, as the verse says: I was King in Jerusalem. Now he is no longer King".

Rashbam: "I, Koheleth ... I was King and because of my high rank my mind was idle ..."

As has already been pointed out in the section on the history of exegesis, a legend about Solomon seems to have grown up around the interpretation of **הייתי** in this verse. Why does Solomon say 'I was King'? The Targumist virtually summarises this legend while Midrash Rabbah and Rashi show definite signs of being acquainted with and having followed an exegetical tradition which was influenced by it. Rashbam, on the other hand, makes no reference to any aspect of the legend. He rightly supposes that the perfect tense of **היה** is used by 'Solomon' simply to introduce part of his past experiences, just as Koheleth uses **ראיתי** and **נחתי** in vv.14 and 15.

1.4

Targum: "Solomon the King said by the spirit of prophecy:
The good generation of the righteous goes from the world because of the sins of the wicked generation which will come after them; but the earth remains forever to reserve the punishment

which is to come upon the world on account of men's sins."

Midrash Rabbah: ".... R. Judah b. Korkah said: The verse should have read 'The earth goes and the earth comes, and the generation remains forever'. What was created for what? Was earth not created for the sake of a generation? Yet a generation, because it does not keep the commands of God, decays, whereas the earth which keeps God's commands does not decay."

Rashi: "Whatever the wicked man may exert himself to rob he does not wear out his occupation, for when this generation is gone, another generation comes and takes everything away from his children, as the text says: 'The ppor will rob his children' (Job 20). And who are those who remain? 'The meek and the humble who bow themselves down to the earth' (Psalms 37). And the Midrash Tanhumah says that all Israel is called 'land' in the text (Mal. 3.12), 'You shall be a land of delight'."

Rashbam: "A generation goes and a generation comes - for all die and return to dust. But the earth goes on forever, i.e. it remains, it persists in its place."

Again it must be conceded that Rashbam has elucidated what Koheleth has said in 1.4. Targum, Midrash Rabbah and Rashi seem unable to handle the plain sense of the passage, for each engages in fanciful interpretations of the text which seem to be dictated by homiletical considerations. Koheleth is concerned to contrast the shortness of man's existence with the apparent endless life of the earth, and nothing more. Targum, Midrash Rabbah and Rashi have introduced the ideas of sin and reward.

1.1

Targum: "The words of prophecy which Koheleth son of David prophesied, the King who was in Jerusalem."

Midrash Rabbah: "..... There were three prophets who had their prophecy attributed to them personally because it was of reproof - 'The words of Amos', 'The words of Koheleth' and 'The words of Jeremiah' Why was he called Koheleth? - Because his words were said in public as the verse says: Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel He was called by three names: Jedidiah (II Sam. 12.25), Koheleth, and Solomon. R. Joshua said: He had seven names: Agur, Jakeh, Lemuel, Ithiel plus the other three. R. Samuel said: The authentic names are Jedidiah,

Koheleth, and Solomon; the other four were given to Solomon as surnames and for expository reasons. He was called Agur because he was stored with words of the law. He was called Jakeh because he discharged words He was called Lemuel because he spoke against God ... He was called Ithiel because he said: God is with me ... King in Jerusalem, i.e. in a place of kingship.

Rashi: "Every place where כְּלִי appears in scripture it means words of reproof; thus (Deut. 1): These are the words which Moses said: and this is followed by: Jeshurun was fat (Deut.32). Again: Words of Amos (Amos 1) followed by: Hear this Word you cows of Bashan (Amos 4). Again: Words of Jeremiah ... (Jeremiah 1) followed by: Ask and see if a man can bear a child (Jeremiah 30). Again, These are the Words of David (II Sam.23), followed by: But godless men are all like thorns thrown away. So here: 'Words of Koheleth' are followed by: 'And the sun rises' and 'all rivers flow into the sea' comparing the wicked to the sun, moon and sea. Thus it is interpreted in the book Siphri.

..... Another interpretation: 'All the rivers flow into the sea' means idolaters, the fools who worship the waters

קהלת . collector, because he gathered much wisdom. We find too that he is called Agur son of Jakeh (Prov.30) because he gathered wisdom and brought it up again. Others interpret it 'speaker' because he spoke all his words in assembly.

'King in Jerusalem' - i.e. the city of wisdom'".

Rashbam: "Solomon is called Koheleth because he gathered wisdom sayings from all the people of the East and became wiser than any man; again, in another place he is called Agur because he collected wisdom sayings, as the verse says: 'The words of Agur son of Jakeh ..' (Prov.30)

מלך . Because he was King in Jerusalem.

In this passage the Targumist is more subdued than in the other examples quoted but he does not change the complexion of things by depicting Solomon as a prophet. There seems to be little difference between Midrash Rabbah and Rashi on this passage. Both contain a considerable amount of fanciful interpretations and traditions. The wide gulf that exists between Rashbam and the others is further demonstrated.

While modern exegetes might not model themselves on Rashbam on this passage, it is clear that he is sober and restrained in comparison with the other three.

• But while Rashbam in his commentary on Koheleth shows an independence of mind by differing - often radically - from the existing rabbinic exegesis of the book, it cannot be argued that he stood outside the Jewish tradition completely. He was acquainted with what had gone before him and was conscious of his Jewish heritage. Apart from his quotations from Scripture and from the Babylonian Talmud²⁶ he makes reference on one occasion to two esoteric works, viz. **מספר יצירה** and **מעשה**

מרכבה²⁷ - Jewish Kabbalistic works. Further, in spite of the fact that he differs considerably from the exegesis of his predecessors he is not above following some of their insights. This can be seen from his treatment on 1.1 which has already been discussed. There, Rashbam argues that Solomon was called Koholeth because he gathered wisdom sayings, and a comparison of this with Rashi demonstrates that the latter is the source of Rashbam's interpretation.

Rashi's influence on his grandson may be further seen from their respective comments on 2.8. Rashi takes **שדה** to have the same meaning as it has in the phrase **שדה**

תיבה ומגדל²⁸ and Rashbam citing the same Talmudic phrase supports this exegesis without acknowledging its origin.

Again, at 7.14 the phrase אחריך is explained by Rashi -

אחריך של הקב"ה and Rashbam reproduces this interpretation - אחריך של הק' .

The above observations on the commentary of Koheleth by Rashbam demonstrate that this work while anchored firmly in the Jewish tradition is a landmark in the history of exegesis.

פי' של ר' שמואל על קהלת

פרשה א'

(א) דברי קהלת, שלמה נקרא קהלת על שם שקיבל חכמות מכל בני קדם ונחמס מכל האדם כי גם במקום אחר נקרא אגור מפני שאגר חכמות שנאמר (משלי ל' א') דברי אגור בן יקם. בדרך, אשר היה מלך בירושלים. (ב) הבל הבליים אומר, עדיין לא אומר רק קהלת מלה וסופל לשון לומר לכלול ולפרש דבריו שהכל הכל. מקרא זה דוגמא לא לנו ה' לא לנו (תהלים קט"ו א') נשאו נהרות ה' נשאו נהרות (שם ל"ג ג'), כי הגה אויבך ה' כי הגה אויבך (שם ל"ב י') שפוחת קהלת במלה ומוכיר את השם מחמת שהוא להוט להוכיר את השם ומוכירו בחוץ מלתו ואחרי כן מתחיל בה לפרשה וכן עשה מוכיר שם קהלת בתחילת המלה ואחרי כן מתחיל בה וגומרה. שתי מקראות הללו דברי קהלת הבל הבליים לא אמרן קהלת כי אם אומרן שסידר הדברים כמות שהם. הבל הבליים, נחן לבו לדרוש ולחזר בעניני העולם ומנחם כולם הכל. (ג) מה יחרון, כל הדברים הללו מוסבים למטה על אין טוב באדם שיאכל ושהה וגו' לומר כל אלו מעשי האדם הכל הם ואין טוב מעשה להנחת האדם רק לשמחה ולשמוח בחלקו. מה יחרון, חזרה שר וריוח יש לו לאדם בכל עמלו שהוא עמל תחת השמש שהרי סופו

עבר ובטל מן העולם ושוב לא יהי לו, בענין זה מוסבת המלה בשיטתה. תחת השמש, לפי שאין נסתר מחמתו אחר לשון זה והרי הוא כאלו כתיב תחת השמים. (ה) דור הולך ודור בא, שכלם מתים ושבים אל העפר. והארץ לעולם עומדת, וקיימת שאינה זזה ממקומה. (ו) וזרח השמש, לבוקר הוא זרח במקומו במזרח ולעת ערב בא ושוקע במערב והולך כל הלילה מחמת שהוא שואף ומחיר עד שהוא מגיע לעת בוקר במקומו אשר זרח היום וגם למחר הוא זרח שם והולך בים מן המזרח ללד דרום והולך דרום ומערב עד שהוא סובב והולך אל הצפון עד שמגיע במקומו במזרח. וסובב כאשר השמש בצפון שהוא קרוב והולך ללד המזרח נופל בו לומר לשון היקוף וסיבוב. (ז) סובב סובב הולך הרוח, מלה כפולה על הולך אל דרום וסובב לומר שהוא סובב והולך כל הרוחות שבטעולם ועל סביבותיו שב הרוח, וכן חזר וסובב חלילה לעולם בכל הקיפותיו וסיבוביו שהוא שב והולך בכל הרוחות שבטעולם אבל אדם היום כאן ומחר בקבר ומעשיו נפסקין שלא יזכר עוד על כן נאמר מה יחרון לאדם. (ח) והים איננו מלא, שאם יתמלא לא יהיו הנחלים הולכים עוד אליו. אל מקום שהנחלים הולכים שם הם שבים ללכת, גם למחר הם שבים והולכים אל הים שלא ייחמו הנחלים מנהגן ומרוצתן אבל אדם מניח מנהגו ונסתו להיות בטל מעולמו, הכל מוסב על מה יחרון. (ט) כל הדברים, כל מעשה עולם יגיעים הם שאין איש יכול לספר ולדבר כולם. לא חשבע עין לראות, כי תמיד הוא רואה ומגפה את הנולדות. ולא חמלא און משמוע, תמיד און שומעת וחאיבה לשמוע את המעשים שנעשים בעולם. לא חמלא, על שם שהאון חלולה נופל בה לשון מילאוי. יגיעים לשון עיף ויגיע (דברים כ"ה י"ח). (י) מזה שהיה, ומה יחרון לאדם בכל חלה מה שהי' כבר הוא שיהי' עוד להבא מה שנעשה כבר הוא שיעשה עוד להבא שאין דבר חדש תחת השמש. (י) שהרי יש לך דבר אחד בעולם שיאמר אדם לחברו

ראה זה דבר חדש הוא בעולם ואין דבריו אמיחין שכבר הי' לפנינו
 כדבר הזה. (יא) אין זכרון לראשונים, מוסב על מה יחרון לאדם.
 לראשונים, בני אדם שנבראו לפנינו בעולם אין להם זכרון שכבר
 מחו ואבד זכרם וגם לאחרונים שיבואו אחרינו בעולם לא יר'י
 להם זכרון עוד עם אותן שיהיו לאחרונה באחרית הימים של
 אחרונים כי כלם ימותו ולא יזכרו עוד שאם ימות אדם אחד היום
 לא יולד לעולם אדם כמוהו שאין בני אדם דומין זה לזה אבל שאר
 בריות מחוץ יש להם זכרון שאם תמותו אלו היום תולדו למחר
 דוגמתן בעולם ועל כן יאמרו הרואים בר' זו דומה לבר' פלונית
 שעברה מן העולם מאלא שיש להם זכרון לשאר בריות מה שאין כן
 באדם על כן נאמר מה יחרון לאדם. (יב) אני קהלה, שהרי
 הייתי מלך ומפני גדולתי הי' לבי פנוי. (יג) ונתחידו לדרוש ולהור
 בחכמה, במעשה עולם ומלאתי שהוא ענין רע נתן הק' לבי
 אדם להחזיק בו. ענין מהפעל של הי' ענה, וכל לענות מן ענה
 ועל כן הוא מופל על לשונו כאשר יאמר קנין לקנות מן קנה, בנין
 לבנות מן בנה כן יאמר ענין לענות מן ענה לשון אחד לשניהם.
 (יד) רעות רוח, ורעון רוח ורעות מן פעל של רעה כמו דמות מן
 דמה רעות מן רעה עמות מן ענה, רוח טלנ"ט' בלע"ז. (טו) כעצות
 לא יוכל לחקון, שאם עוות אדם את מעשיו אינו יכול להיות
 מחוקן במעשיו כבתחלה לפי הק'. וחסרון לא יוכל כופל מלחו,
 ואם חסר שום דבר אותו חסרון אינו יכול להיות עוד מינוי וספור
 עם המותר שנשתייר. (טז) דברתי אני עם לבי, פינשימי⁽²⁾
 בלע'. לאמר, וכך אמרתי. על כל, יותר מכל החכמים שהיו
 לפני בירושלים קודם שנולדתי. (יז) ודעת, כמו ולדעת וכן דעת
 מה יעשה ישראל כמו לדעת. הוללות, כמו לשחוק אמרתי מהולל.

⁽¹⁾ Talent, Neigung, Lust.

⁽²⁾ Pensai moi, ich dachte.

ושכלות, חכמה וכופל לשונו על לדעת חכמה. ורעיון, לשון רעיון כמו ורעות רוח וכאשר יאמר לביון מן לבה, לביון מן אבה, עליון מן עלה, הביון מן הגה, כן יאמר רעיון מן רעה לשון רעיון. (יה) כי ברוב חכמה, שהרי ברוב חכמתו מחשב ומעמיק על ראות עיניו ומחוך כך כועס ברוב כעס. ויוסיף, כופל מלה שמחוך שהוא מוסיף חכמה יתרה ודעת הרבה מחשב ומעמיק במעשיו של הק' שהוא עושה בעולם על מה הוא עושה אוסס שאינו יכול לעמוד עליהם ומחוך רוב מחשבותיו כועס ומוסיף מלאוב:

פרשה ב'

פור פנשימיי^(א) לכה נא, וכך אמר לי לבי לכה נא וראה בטוב. אנסכה, לשון נסיכות וקלינות אחסנה עצמי בנסיכות של שמחה לשמוע קול שרים וקול שרות למען אחי' שמח וטוב לב. בטוב, בשחוק וששון. והנה גם הוא הבל, גם דבר זה הוא לי להבל כי מה יחרון לי בשמחה ושחוק. (ב) מהולל שטח. לשחוק על השחוק אמרתי שהוא מהולל ועל שמחה אמרתי מה זו טובה עושה היא ומה יחרון בה. לשחוק שהוא לשון זכר מוסב על וראה בטוב שגם הוא לשון זכר ולשון ולשמחה מוסב על אנסכה בשמחה. לשחוק ולשמחה פחרנו על השחוק ועל השמחה כמו כאשר דבר לך שפת' כאשר דבר עליך, וכן אמרי לי אחי הוא אמרי עלי אחי הוא. (ג) חרתי בלבי, הייתי חר ודורש בעלמי. למשוך ביין, להחענג ולשמח עצמי ביין דוגמת ויין ישמח לבב אנוש. ולבי נוהג בחכמה, שאין בה עומק שהיא לריכה לעולם, וכן ולאחזו בסכלות כופל לשונו,

^(א) ג"ל שמוסב על אמרתי ופירושו בלע"ז כמו לעיל פסוק ט"ז דברתי.

אבל כי ברוב חכמה שלמעלה היא חכמה עמוקה שאין בני אדם לריכין
 לה ואין רגילין בה. עד אשר אראה, שאיני יודע על איזה דבר
 לסמוך ללכת בו. איזה טוב, איזה ענין טוב הוא. מספר
 ימי חייהם, בחייהם. (ו) צומח, לשון גידול. (ז) מכל שהי' לפני,
 יחד מכל אדם שהיו לפני בירושלים קודם שנולדתי. (ח) וסגולת
 מלכים, אולרת חמדת מלכים. והמדינות, ואולרת חמדת המדינות.
 עשיתי לי, חקנתי לעורכי כמו וכן הבקר אשר עשה וכן ועשתה
 את לפני. שדרה ושדות, כמו שדה חיבה ומגדל ואף עגלת לב
 לחצונג ולמוי. (ט) וגדלתי והוספתי, בעושר לעשות כל המעשים
 האלה ברב עשרי וכבודי. אף חכמתי, גם חכמה הייתה לי, ושחיתן
 הכל בעיני. וכל לשון את של פרשה כי גם אוחן שלשה דברים שנחן
 לו הק' עושר וחכמה וחיים הן לפניו להכל, ועושר וחכמה מוזכר
 במקרא זה שהן הכל וגם את החיים מוזכר למטה שנאמר ושנאחי
 את החיים וגו'. (י) לא אצלתי, לא הגדלתי מהם שעשיתי לי כל
 דבר השיבות אשר ראיתי. כי לבי שמח, שהרי לבי הי' שמח.
 וזה הי' חלקי, חלק זה הי' לי. (יא) ופניתי אני, לחת לבי בכל
 המעשים האלה ומנאחים כולם הכל והיו שנאמר למעלה מה יחרון
 להם כל עמלו וגו'. (יב) כי כה האדם, שהרי מה לו על האדם
 שהוא בה החי המלך להסתקן לפניו ולבקש על נפשו את אשר
 בבר יעשהו, לאחר שכבר גמרו גמר דינו, שלאחר שגמר הדין טוב
 אף לו תקנה, והכל הוא זה שבא אחר גמר דין לבקש חנינה. (יג)
 יראתי אני, שנחתי לבי לדבר זה. לחכמה, למ"ד פחוחה. היא
 חכמה הרגילה וזריכה שאינה עמוקה, לחכמה כמו להחכמה לאותה
 חכמה שאנו רגילין בה אבל אילו תנקד' למ"ד בחטף אז תהי'
 בחכמה החיבה חכמה עמוקה ויחירה. חכמה נמשלה לאור וסכלות
 להבדל. חכמה שנאמר (יד) החכם עיניו בראשו וגו', שמשמר עצמו

(א) בב"י חב"ד.

ללכת באור ואינו נופל. והבסיל, הולך בחשך ונופל וגם בכל זאת
 כזה כן זה שמחיים שניהם כאחד. (יג) גם אני יקרני, שאמות כאחד
 מן הכסילים ואיזה ריוח יש לי בחכמתי יותר ממנו שגם זה הבל ועל
 כן נאמר מה יתרון לאדם לחכם עם הכסיל שהרי אין זכרון לא לזה
 ולא לזה שכבר הכל נשכח בימים הבאים. (יד) איך ימות, הפסד
 גדול הוא זה שימות החכם עם הכסיל. בכל מקום שנאמר איך
 הוא דבר המחקיים כמו איך היחה לשמה, איך נהפכת לי סורי הגפן
 נכרי'. (טו) ושנאחי את החיים, את החיות שנתן לי הק' שהוא
 אחד משלשה שנתן לו הק'. שנאחי, לפי שאין אני רואה באריכות
 ימי רק הכל הבל את עמלי ואת עשרי. (טז) שאני עמל תחת
 השמש, כמו תחת השמים. אחריו, ה' אומר על עצמו לפי שאינו
 רוצה לתלות קללות מיחה בעצמו. ויש לומר אחריו של ממון. (יז) ומי
 יודע, על בני שיבא אחרי אם יהיה חכם וישלוט בכל עמלי שיחקיים
 עשרי בידו (יח) סכל יהיה ויפול עמלי ועשרי מידו ליד אחרים.
 גם זה הבל, שאם הוא סכל ילא עמלי מידו ונמצא שעל הבל עמלתי
 בו. (יט) וסבותי אני, ועל כן סבותי ונחישתי בלבי על כל עמלי
 שהרי יש לך אדם בעולם כמותי שטרם בחכמה ובדעת ובכשרון לקנות
 ממון ולאדם שלא טרם בו הק' יתנו. גם זה הבל, ועל הבל
 טרם בו הראשון. (כ) כי מה הורה לאדם, שהרי איזה ריוח הוא
 ויש לו לאדם שהוא טורח בו שהרי כל ימיו מכאובים, וכל מנהגו בכעס
 מחמת שהוא מחשב ומחזור לקנות ממון וגם בלינה כשהוא שוכב על
 משכבו לבו אינו שוכב כי תמיד לבו חושב שלא יברח ולא יסתלק
 הממון מידו והוא שנאמר למטה והשבע לעשיר אינו מיח וגו'. (כא)
 אין טוב באדם שיאכל, אין דבר טוב בעסקי האדם אלא שיאכל
 וטחה להראות לעצמו טובה בעמלו ממנו אשר טרם בו, כי מן השמים
 הוא דבר זה שאין בו הבל אכל כל הדברים הללו אשר סיפרתי למעלה
 כולן דברי הבל הם. (כב) כי מי יאכל, שהרי מי הוא שראוי לאכול
 ולמחר לשמוח בעמלי מבלעדי, ועל כן יש לאכול ולשתות ולשמוח בטוב

בעמלו. (יג) כי לאדם שטוב לפניו, שהרי לאדם שהוא טוב לפני
הק' כמוי שנתן הק' מול לאסוף ממון לזרע ולהנחתו, ולאדם חוטא
נתן הק' עין לאסוף ממון לצורך אחר שהוא טוב בעיניו דוגמא יכון
רע וליק גם זה הכל ונמצא שעל החכם טרח בו החוטא ועל כן יש
לי לאכול ולשחוח ולשמוח בעמלי:

פרשה ג'

(א) לכל זמן, לכל המעשים יש להם זמן ולכל חפץ אשר תחת
השמים יש לו עת עתי רעה ועתי טובה לשלם לצדיות משכורתם
וכפי פעלם השלום רע וחשלוט טוב עתים של רעה ועתים של טובה
ואח"כ אפרש את העתים. (ב) עת ללדת, פעם זה נולד זה מת.
עת לטעם, בעת שלום. ועת לעקור נטוע, בעת מלחמה וכן כל
העתים הללו כלולים בעת מלחמה ועת שלום חוץ מעת ללדת וחוד
מן עת לחטוא ועת לדבר לפי פשוטו של מקרא ועל כן נכתב בסופן
לומר זה הכלל עת מלחמה ועת שלום. (ג) מה יחרון העושה,
ייתב על יחוטא נתן עין לאסוף לומר אחרי שחטא לטובה ועתים
לרעה וגם חוטא זה עת שהוא אוסף ממון ועת שהוא יולא מידו לחת
אוחי לאדם שהוא טוב מה יחרון האוסף באשר הוא עמל וטורח בממון
זה אחרי שהוא יולא מידו. העושה, האוסף כמו עשה לי את החיל
זה. (ד) הענין, המנהג. לענות, להתנהג. (ה) את הכל,
כל המעשים עשה וחיין הק' כל אחד נכון והגון בעתו חמנו. גם
את העולם, גם את הזמן נתן להם הק' בלבם של בני אדם שידעו
ידיים שעתים שהם לטובה ויש עתים לרעה לפי שלא ימצא ולא ידע
האדם את המעשה אשר יעשה הק' מראש ועד סוף שאם יהיו כל
העתים לטובה או כולם לרעה לא ישוב אדם בחשבה לפני הק' לפי

שיאמר בלבד אחרי שמקרה אחד בעולם או הכל לעובדה או הכל לרעה
 על זה אינו רוע מעשי ואיזה הנאה תגיע לי בתשובתי מראש
 ועד סוף מתחלת העת ועד סוף העת. (יב) כי אין טוב, בכל
 העמים ובכלה מעשים הללו מה כי אם לשמוח וגו', זהו שאמר אין
 טוב באלהם שיאכל ושתה וגו'. (יג) מתח אלהים, מן השמים הוא
 מחן זה שחננו לו טעה ומול לעשות טובה לעמנו. (יד טו) כי כל
 אשר יעשה, כל העמים בידו של הק'. והאלהים עשה, עתי
 רעה ועתי טובה כדי שייראו מלפניו בני האדם לעשות תשובה
 ויאמרו מה שהי' כבר בימים הראשונים שהיו עמים משתנים עכשיו
 הוא קיים היום הזה לחנו מנהג ואוחו סדר ומנהג שחיד להיות
 כבר הי' בימים שעבר שציקש הק' את הנדק ליתן לו את ממון
 זה שטרח בו רודפו. (טז) ועוד ראיתי, זאת בעולם שהרי הכל
 במקום המשפט, שיש שם אנשים לדיקים קבועים לעשות משפט שבה
 הרשע שבאים רשעים להכרית לדיקים ממקומם וישיבים תחתיהם.
 ומקום הצדק כופל מלחו שמה הרשע, שם דבר כמו הרשע אבל
 סוף פסוק פותח הרי"ש כמו יבח יבח, הללוהו בלללי שמע שהוא
 באתנהחא. (יז) אמרתי אני בלבי, על זאת תשבתי לומר שהק'
 שופט הדיקים כמו שהוא עושה דין ומשפט ברשעים על אשר חטאו
 לדיקים במקל מעשיהם נטרדו ממקומם ויבאו רשעים תחתיהם שהרי
 יש עת לכל חפץ של הק' לקיים, ועל כל המעשה שעושה האדם
 שם ידימוהו לפי מעשיו במקום שחטא, והכל הוא שנידון כאחד לדיק
 ורשע. (יח) על דברת, על אודות בני האדם שהם חוטאים עוסק
 הק' לבדחם מן העולם וגורם הוא להם לבני אדם לראות בעמם
 שהם חטובים כבהמה. לברם, משקל חוק גורת וברוחי מכם
 המורדים הפתעים בי (יחזקאל כ' ל"ח) מן פעל של ברה וכאשר יאמר
 לכלם מן לכלה שנה' בחימה לכלה, לעלה לעלם, כן יאמר לברה לברם
 במשקל חוק אבל רי"ש אינה יכולה להדגיש, אבל מן לברות במשקל
 חוק יאמר לברותם כמו כן לכלות לכלותם, לכסות לכסותם, לעלות

לעלותם. ואינה יכול לומר שיהי' מגורת בר שחם כן הי' לו לומר להבירם בלשון מפעיל כמו כן שב להשיבם, קם להקימם, סר^י להסירם. שוהם, איזה מתקיים עליהם שהרי בהמה המה. (יט ב) כי מקרה אחר, שהרי מקרה אדם ומקרה הבהמה מקרה אחד ומנהג אחד הוא שמחים שניהם בענין אחד ורוח אחד להם וחיות אחד להם. ומוחר האדם, יחרון האדם יותר מן הבהמה אין וחרוהו הוא כי הכל הבל ששניהם שווין אדם ובהמה ילך אל מקום אחד שהרי מן העפר היו לעפר ישובו. (א=) מי יודע, מוסב על ורוח אחד לכל לומר על כן איני אומר רוח אחד לשניהם כי מי הוא שידע שרוח האדם עולה למעלה ורוח בהמה יורדת למטה ועל כן איני אומר רוח אחד להם והכל הבל, כי מה יחרון לאדם יותר מן הבהמה. (ב=) וראיתי, הפשתי בכל לדדן וראיתי שהרי אין טוב לאדם יותר מדבר זה אשר ישמח האדם במעשיו לאכול ולשמוח בחלקו כי זו היא מנה טובה לעלמו בעודו חי שהרי מי יבואנו בעולם לאחר מיתתו לדעת ולראות בבנו שיהי' אחריו שירש נכסיו אם יתקיימו בידו כי שמח בנו יהי' סכל ולא יתקיימו נכסיו בידו ועל כן טוב לו לאדם לאכול ולשחות ולשמוח בחייו:

פרישה ד'

י"א) ושבתני אני, ועוד חזרתי לראות את כל העשוקים שנאסם חתום חידם והנה הם בוכים ואין להם מנחם להחזיר ממונם. ומיד צדיקים, שהם בעלי נח אין להם מנחם כך הוא מופל לשונו והכל

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הבל כי מה פשע זה שנאנס ממנו מידו. (ג) ושבח אני, כמו ולשבח, ועוסק אני לשבח את המחסים שמחו כבר יותר מן החיים שהם חיים עדיין הנה שהמחסים נפטרו כבר מכל לרה ומחשבה רעה אבל החיים עדיין טרודים בהבלי עולם. עדנה, כמו עד הנה. (ג) וטוב משניהם, זהו משוכה יותר משניהם את אשר עדיין לא הי' בעולם שלא ראה מעשים רעים הללו אשר בעולם. (ה) כשרון, חקן המעשה. כי היא קנאת איש, שיש לו לאיש מרעו גס זה הבל, כי מפני מה הוא מקנא בו בחכמתו ובעשרו, איזה דבר אנס וגול ממנו אם הק' נתן לו טובה מה יש לו לזה שהוא מקנא בו ומה פשע לו בכך. (ה) הבסיל חובק את ידיו, שאינה עושה מלאכה להחפרנס בה ואוכל את בשרו, ואין לו מה יאכל בשביל כך כי אם בשרו שהוא מתגאה והולך לפי שלא עשה מלאכה להחפרנס בה ועל כן יש לו לאדם לעשות מלאכה למען יחפרנס בכבוד. (ו) טוב מלא כף נוח, נוח ומוטב לו לאדם שיהי' לו מלא כף ממון בנחת כדי שיחפרנס בכבוד ממלא חפצים עמל שטוב לו ממון מועט ממון גדול בעמל שלא יחפרנס בו בכבוד. (ו) ושבתי אני, ועוד ראיתי בעולם מעשה של הבל, שהרי יש לך אחד בעולם שהוא טורח ולהוט בעמלו ואינו רוצה שיהי' עמו אדם שני לסייעו שיקח חלקו עם סחורתו ועמלו. גם בן ואח אין לו, כופל לשונו, שאינו רוצה שיהי' לו ריע שיעזור לו ויחלוק עמו לא יהי' קץ לעמלו לאותו היחידי ולא ישיג תאות לבו וגם עינו לא תשבע לראות בעשרו, שיהי' לו לחשוב בעצמו למי אני עמל כל כך להיות מחסר נפשי מטובה. גם זה הבל, שאינו מחשב כל כך וטורח ועמל יותר מדי וחסר נפשו מטובה. (ז) טובים השנים, משוכים הם שני בני אדם שמחזירים זה עם זה לעסוק בסחורתן ובעמלם יותר מן היחידי שהוא עמל וטורח ביחידות. שבר טוב שהם מולאים ריוח גדול. (י) כי אם יפולו, שהרי אם יפול אז זה לא האחד יקיס את חבירו, ואין לו לאחד שהוא עמל יחידי שאם יפול ואין שני להקומו ועל כן אין לו ליחידי

ואם הם שנים בימות הלילה אז יתחממו אם ישכבו שניהם ביחד ואם
 הוא שוכב יחידי איך יחם, על כן נאמר טובים השנים מן האחד.
 ואילו, כמו אבי לו, וכן אי לך ארץ שמלכך נער ופחד' אבי לך
 ארץ. (יב) ואם יתקפו האחד, שהרי אם יבא אחד מן השוק כגון
 נבב וליסטס שיבא על זה לגזול ממנו ממונו אילו שנים לנגדו ולא יכול
 נגד שניהם שלא יהי' לו נלחון עם שני בני אדם, ואם הם שלשה רעים
 שנתחברו ביחד כמו חוט משולש יתקיימו עד מאד ולא יתקו מהרה.
 יתקפו, כמו החוקף עבדו של חברו (בלשון המשנה), וכמו שנאמר
 חזקתני וחוכל. (יג) טוב ילד מסכן וחכם, משובח הוא בחור אחד
 שהוא עני וחכם יותר ממלך שהוא עשיר והוא זקן והוא כסיל שאינו
 יודע ומבין עוד להיות זהיר וחכם מחמת שהוא כסיל דוגמות ב': אבי
 עמי אחי לא ידעו בניס סכלים המה וגו'. מסכן, ואיני יכול לפותרו
 כמו חכם לעשותו ככל מלה ושם דבר של חכם כמו המסוכן חרומה,
 הלאל יסכון גבר לפי שיש בו תחת מסכן טפחא להפליגו מן וחכם.
 ילד, מוסב על זקן מסכן מוסב על ממלך וחכם מוסב על וכסיל.
 (יד) כי מבית הסורים, שהרי מלך זקן וכסיל זה ילא מבית האסורים
 מבטן אמו להיות עתיד למלך שלאחר שגולד נפל לו כבוד של מלוכה,
 ילד מסכן וחכם זה גם הוא ילא מבטן אמו ושמה היום או מחר יפול
 לו כבוד של מלוכה כמו שגפל לזה וגמלא שהילד משובח ממנו שהוא
 חכם ואותו מלך כסיל הוא. הסורים, כמו האסורים ועל כן סמ"ך
 נרפי"ח ופעמים חלף נופלת מן החיבה, כמו לא יהל שם ערבי שהוא
 כמו יאהל. כי גם במלכותו גולד, שהרי גם במלכותו של מלך
 זקן כסיל זה נולד לו בן רש וכסיל כמותו. (טו) ראיני את כל
 החיים המהלכים תחת השמש עם הילד, זה שני אשר עמד
 להיות מלך תחת אביו והוא כסיל כאביו, וראיתי שאין קץ לכל
 העם לכל אותו דור ראשון שהי' בימי אביו של זה שהם לא היו שמחים
 עליו תחת סכלות שאותו דור היו לפניהם של אלו אחרונים שהם
 מועבדים לבנו של זה שהוא רש וכסיל, וגם אלו אחרונים לא

ישמחו בו בצנו ברוב כסילותו שגם זה הבל, שהם מלכים כסילים
והדורות משועבדים להם. עם הילד השני, בנו זה שולד קורא
שני על שם שהוא נולד כסיל שני חתח לביו. (י) שבמור רגלך,
שמור את רגלך שחלך בטורה ובנקיות ובענוה וגם חלך יחף כאשר
חלך לדרוש חלקים להחפלה בבית המקדש כענין שנאמר של נעליך
מעל רגליך כי המקום וגו'. וקרוב לשמוע, והק' יהי לך קרוב
לשמוע תפלהך יותר מנתינת זבחי הכסילים. שהרי אינם יודעים
כסילים הללו לעשות מעשים טובים, ועל כן הם מוזמנים לעשות רע:

פרישה ה'

(א) אל חברה את פוך, וכאשר תחפלה לפניו לא חת' בהול
בחפלהך להוציא ריבוי דברים לפני הק', כי הוא בשמים ועל כן יש
להתיירא ממנו אם תרבה דברים לפניו ויהיו דבריך מעטים שלא
חת' נשל ברוב דבריך, והוא שנאמר ברוב דברים לא יחדל פסע,
וגם כמו כן אמרו חכמי כל המרבה דברים מביא חטא. (ב) כי בא
החלום, שהרי חלום זה שאדם חולם בלילה ברוב ענינו ומנהגיו שהוא
מחשב ביום הוא, והוא שנאמר ורעיוניך על משכבך סליקו, והבל
וריק הוא חלומי, וכן קיל כסיל ברוב דברים הם הבל וחסו שעל
ידי ריבוי דבריו נודע ויכר שהוא כסיל ויש לך למעט דבריך למען
תרחק מן הכסילות. (ג) כאשר תדר נדר, לה"ק בעת תפלהך
אל תאחר לשלבו, וכן הוא המנהג לדור בשעת תפלה כי אין חפץ
של הק' בכסילים שמודין ואין משלימין, ועל כן אמרתי לך את אשר
חדור שלם, שהרי טוב משובח הוא מי שאינו נודר כל עיקר ממי
שמוד ואינו משלם. (ד) אל תתן את פוך, להרבות דברים לפני

הק' ברוב שיחתך כדי להחטיא את עצמך שכל המרבה דברים מביא חטא, ולאחר ריבוי דבריו לא תאמר לפני הק' כי שגגה אודות מרבית דבריו שכל מהשבותיך גלויות וידועות לפניו כי במיד ובזדון הרבית דברים, למה יקלוק הק' על קול ריבוי דבריו שהוא הבל וחסד ורזה שיחביל וישחית את פעולתך ואת מעשה ידך שהוא עיקר ושורש מעשיך. להחטיא, כמו להחטיא. מלאך, הוא מלאכו של הק'. (ו) כי בריב חלומות, שהרי ברוב חלומות והבלים ורוב דברים הולכים ונאבדים בני אדם מן העולם, וזהו שאמר למה יקלוק האלקים וגו'. כי את, אלא את האלקים ירא שלא להרבות דברים. (ז) אם עושק, אם תראה עושק של רש וגזל של משפט ולדק שזה גזל לרש את ממונו וזה גזל לחבירו את משפטו ומענות את דינו למען יפסיד ממונו, אל תחבזה. על חפצים של בני אדם בדברים הללו, שהרי יש גבול אחר על גבול זה שאם ממון רש ועויה משפט ולדק שגם הוא יגזל ממונו של זה. וגבורים עליהם, ויש גבולים בעולם שהם חוקים וידם תקיפה על גבולים אלו שגם הם יגזלו מהם ממונם ויעוותו משפטם ולדקם של אלו גבולים אשר גזלו לאחרים, וכן מגלגל ומנהיג הק' את עולמו. דומה למדרש אגדה" של הודיעני נא את דרכיך וגו'. שובר, שממחין גבול השני לגבול הראשון שחגיע שעתו לגזול את כל אשר לו ולעוות משפטו. גזל, שם דבר הוא וטעמו למטה וכשהוא דבוק נקד כולו בפת"ח קט"ן וטעמו למעלה גזל, וכן כפל גדר. (ח) ויחרון ארץ בכל בני אדם הוא שיש לכולם לעבוד אדמה למען יחיו ויחפרנסו מעמל ידיהם ואף המלך יש לו להיות עובד אדמה לשדה נעבד. את שהוא מצוה לעמו להכריזה לעבוד אדמה לצורכו בכך נקרא הוא עובד אדמה. (ט) אורב בסף, יוחר מדי לא יחי' מעולם שבע ממונו. ומי אורב בהמון, כופל מלחו לומר מי שהוא אורב המוני של חמון לא חבוא אליו שפעת מרבית

(ו) ברכות דף ז' ע"א.

ממון כמה שהוא חומד. גם זה רב, כאלה שהוא עוסק וטורח לקנות ממון יותר מדי כי די לו אם יכול להסתפק בכבוד בלא הון רב. חבואה, כמו חבואה וכן לא חבואי (רוח ב' ח') כמו לא חבואי, וכן חמורס בספר משלי (י"ד ג') כמו חמורס. (י) ברבות הטובה, בטובה רבה וגדולה ביד האדם ברוב ממון מהמת שהוא עוסק יותר מדי לקנות ממון הרבה כנגד אותו ממון שהוא גדול רבים לו אוכלים ומוציא ממנו שלפי שהוא משחק רבים לרכיו כמו שחמרו רבותינו ברכת הבית ברובה. מה כשרון, מה יחרון וכשרון לבעלי של טובה גדולה זו על מה הוא טורח על כך יותר מדי אין לו זה הנאה רק ראות עיניו שהוא רואה את הטובה בידו ואין לו ריוח ושכר בכך. (יא) מחזקה שנת העובד, טובה הוא שנתו ועתה של עובד אדמה שהוא יכול לאכול מעבודת קרקעו אם מעט אם הרבה. והשבע לעשיר, שיש לו שובע גדול והון רב ואחר עושר אינו מניח לו לישון כי חמיר הוא מחשב בממונו שלא יאבד כמו ש' למעלה גם כלילה לא שכב לבו. (יב) חולה, אנפרמ"א (בלע"ז). עושר שמור, ומוצא לדרך בעליו לרעתו ולא לטובתו כאשר טרח לקנות ממון חשב לקנות לטובתו והפכה לו לרעתו שפעמים שהוא נהרג או נחפס בשביל ממנו ונאבד אותו עושר בענין רע שלא נהנה ממנו והוליד בן אחרי כן שאין בידו מאומה שאין לו מה יתן לבנו להורישו ולהנחילו. (יג) כאשר יצא מבטן אמו, עני ורש שלא הי' לו כלום בשעה שנולד כן ישוב ערום וחסר לקברו שלא ישא בידו מאומה כי אבד ממנו, שילך כמו שילך. (יד) וגם זו, אף זאת רעה חולה בכל אלו של מעלה כל כנגד אותו ענין שבה לעולם בשעה שנולד שהי' חסר ורש וערום כן הולך מן העולם בסופו. ומה יחרון לו, בכל אלו ממנו שטרח ועמל על חנם. ולא זו בלבד הגיע לו שהרי אף בכל ימיו בעודו חי הכל בחשך ונחמלא כעס הרבה וחולי

וקלף ברוב מחשבותיו כשהי' קונה ממונו. (י) הגה אשר ראיתי
אני, הגה דבר זה נכון אשר ראיתי שטוב לו לאדם לאכול ולשחות
ולראות טובה בעמלו שיהי' שמח בחלקו בעודנו חי מעמלו אשר טרח
בחיו מלוחו ממון שנתן לו הק' כי הוא חלקו דבר זה הוא חלקו
ואין לך דבר טוב יותר מזה, וזה שנאמר למעלה אין טוב באדם
שיאכל ושתה וגו'. (יח) גם כל האדם, אף על כל המעשים הללו
שעושים בני האדם מעשה זה טוב ומשובח יותר מכולם שכל האדם
שנתן לו הק' עושר ונתן לו יכולת לשלוט בעשרו לאכול וליטול חלקו
ממנו שיהי' שמח בחלקו ובעמלו נתינת מתנה חשובה היא לו שנתנו
לו מן השמים. (יט) כי לא הרבה, שהרי לא הרבה ימים שלאחר
מיתחו לא יזכור אוחו הזכר על ממונו שהיה ועל מעשיו שעשה בימי
חייו, שאפי' לא יהי' לו בעולם לאחר מיתחו מלוחו אדם אשר הוריש
לו נכסיו וממונו כי האלהים אלא הק' נתן לו ממון זה למען יהי'
משורר ושמח בלבו ולהיות שמח בחלקו בחייו. מענה, לשון מפעיל
והוא לשון שמחה חמרה כמו ונתן להם מרים, וענתה השירה:

פרשה ו'

(א) ורבה היא, ורעה רבה היא על האדם. (ב) איש,
שנתן לו הק' עושר גדול ואין לו יכולת ורשות שיאכל ויהנה ממנו
אלא איש נכרי יאכלנו שלא טרח בו, זה מעשה הבל כי על מה טרח
זה בו. (ג) אם יוליד איש, זה שאכל איש נכרי ממונו עד מאה
בנים ויחי' שנים רבות, ורב שיהיו ימי שניו, כפל מלחו שהיו ימי
שניו רבים ולא היחה נפשו שביעה מן הטובה שבדו ואף לעת מיתחו
לא יתן לקבורה אמרתי עליו שהנפל אשר לא ראה אור ולא מולד

הי משובח יותר ממנו, שהרי הוא בא בעולם בהבל והלך מן העולם
 בחשך, ושמו מכוסה בחשך. שכל אודותיו של זה שאבד ממנו ולא
 ייתן לקבורה היו בהבל ובחשך שלא ראה בטוב אבל נפל זה לא הי'
 לו לא טוב ולא רע. אם יוליד איש בואה, לפי שמוכיר בסוף
 המקרא הנפל שילדתו בהבל ומכוסה אחו לשמו בילדות רבות והשיבות
 של מלאה בנים. (ה) גם שמש לא ראה, שנפל זה לא בא כלום
 ולא ידע מאומה ואעפ"כ משובח הוא יותר ממנו שלא ראה נפל זה
 לא טוב ולא רע, וזה לא ראה רק רע כל היום. וגם שמש לא
 ראה וגם נפל כל יחזה שמש. (ו) ואלו הי', ואם הי' זו אלפים
 שנה ולא ראה בטובה חיו משובח כלום שהרי אל מקום אחד הכל
 הולכים. (ז) כל עמל האדם לפיהו, שאינו עורר כי אם על
 אודות אכילתו. וגם הנפש לא חמלא, שבכל יום ויום הוא מחמאה
 לאכול. (ח) כי מזה יותר, שהרי מה יחרון להם יותר מן הכסיל
 בעולם ששניהם היין ועומדין בעולם באחד ועל כן אמרתי הכל הבל.
 מזה לעני יודע, באיזה דבר התחיל עני זה גרוע מן החכם שהרי הוא
 יודע לילך בעולם עם שאר החיים כאחד מן החכמים. (ט) טוב
 מראה עינים, יש לך אדם בעולם שטוב לו ראות עיניו בממונו
 שהוא רואה ומסתכל בו יותר ממה שהוא אוכל ומשביע נפשו גם זה
 הבל. (י) מזה שהי' כבר, אחו שהי' גביר ונקרא שמו וגודע שהוא
 אדם חשוב וגבור בשעת המיתה לא יכול לדין ולהלחם עם מלאך
 המות שהוא תקיף ממנו ועל כן אמרתי הכל הבל. (יא) כי יש
 דברים, שהרי יש דברים בעולם שמדברים בני האדם רוב דברים
 שמביאים את האדם לידי עניות שכל המרבה דברים מביא חטא,
 ומה יחרון ברוב דברים, ועל כן אמרתי הכל הבל. (יב) כי מי
 יודע, שהרי מי הוא היודע איזה דבר טוב לו לאדם לעשות בעולם
 הזה שאילו הי' יודע לבחור מעשה הטוב הי' לו לעשות והם אינם
 עושים כך שהם עושים ימי חיי הבלם כלל עובר שאינם רואים לילך
 בדרך הטוב ועל כן הם מחים קודם זמנם ומעשים טובים יש לו

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לעשות אשר מי הוא שיגיד מה שיהי אחרי מוחו בעולם ולבניו אשר
יהיו אחרינו ועל כן יש לו לעשות מעשים טובים למען אשר ימצאו
בניו אחרינו ברכה:

פרשה ז'

(א) טוב שם משמון טוב, טוב ומשובח שם טוב של אדם
יותר משמן טוב של הפרסמון שריחו נודף לפי שמנינו במקום אחר
מקרא מלא שהמשיל והזכיר שם לשמן טוב שמן חורק שמך. ואל
חחמה על אשר נמשלו והזכירו שיהם במקרא זה יחד. ויום הבנות
ביום הולדו, ומשובח וטוב יום מיתתו מיום לידתו שביום מיתתו
פוסקים מעשו הרעים ולא יחטא עוד אבל יום לידתו רע הוא לו
כי לעמל מולד שנאמר כי אדם לעמל יולד. ועוד בשביל שאין אדם
אשר לא יחטא רע הוא לו יום לידתו. (ב) טוב ללבב, מוטב לו
לאדם שילך לבית אבילות יותר מאשר ילך לבית משתאות כי בית
אבילות הוא כוץ מיתתו של כל אדם ואדם חי שהולך שם נותן
מחשבתו ולבו על מיתתו של אדם ומחוך כך הוא מונע מלחטוא
אבל כשהוא הולך לשמוע בבית המשתה מחוך שמחתו חוטא. (ג) טוב
בעם בשחוק, מוטב לו לאדם כעס שהוא בעל מחשבות לחשוב
בעין המיתה שהוא כוץ כל האדם ואינו שמח יותר ממה שהוא
עובד בשחוק של בית המשתה, שהרי ברוע פנים שיש לו מחמת
שהוא מרעב בעין המיתה ייטב לבו שלא יחטא. (ד) לב חכמים
בבית אבל, ללכת שמחוך כך נוחים לבם על יום המיתה ואינם
חוטאים, ולב כסילים בבית שמחה, ומחוך שמחתן הן חוטאים
שאינן נוחות פחד אלקים נגד עיניהם. (ה) טוב לשמוע, ומוטב

לו לאדם שישמע גערותו של חכם ועל כן יחכם יותר מאיש שומע שיר
 כסילים שלא יבין ולא ישמע שם רק דברי כסילות. (ו) כי בקול,
 שהרי בקול הקוליס ששמע בשעת העברת דליקתן שמונים ומחצתים
 תחת סיר של נחשת כדי לבשל חבשיל שבו ואין אש של אוחן קוליס
 אש חשובה כשאר אש של שאר עמים כן שחוק הכסיל ברוב דבריו
 שהוא משמיע בקולו דברים שאין בהן טעם וריח, ודבריו חוכמה
 וחכמה. וגם זה הבל, כשאר הבליס הנאמרים למעלה, ועל כן
 יש לאדם להתרחק מן הכסילים ושחוק של דבריהם. (ז) כי העושק
 יהולל חכם, מוסב על ולב כסילים בבית שמחה לומר הכסילים הם
 משוכים ולהטעים ללכת בבית השמחה ואותה שמחה מביאין לידי
 חטא ועון, על כן יש להתרחק לחכמים מן הכסילים שהרי הכסיל
 שהוא מלא כסילות ועושק יהולל חכם לעשותו כסיל ומאבד את לב
 החכמה שהיא מתנה לאדם מן הק', ונהפכה חכמה החכם כסילות.
 העושק, הכסיל קרוא עושק על שם שהוא מלא כסילות ועושק
 ודוגמא וחטא עמך שהעם קורא חטא. מחנה, חכמה קורא
 מתנה כענין שנאמר כי ד' יתן חכמה. (ח) טוב אחרית דבר
 מראשיתו, יותר מראשיתו של דבר שהרי בראשיתו לא נודע ולא נגלה
 סודו עד באחריתו ויש על השומע לשמוע ולהטות און שלא יפנה פה
 עד אשר ישמע. טוב ארך רוח, שהרי מאריך אפו וחרונו יותר
 מאותו שהוא גבה רוח וכועס מהרה, באדם שהוא (וחרן) נוכל לומר
 ארך רוח אריכות שמאריך על אודות כעסו ואינו חושש בו וסובל
 חרונו ושחוק ואחרי שזה לשון מופל באדם שאינו רגון מופל גם באותו
 שהוא כועס מהרה לקרותו גבה רוח. (ט) אל חבהל ברוחך לבעים,
 וכף את ירך שלא תנעם שהרי כעס אלל כסילים שהם רגזים.
 (י) אל האמר בזה היה, אל האמר מה הם המעשים הנעשים
 עכשיו בעולם שלא חכמה ולא חשאל עליהם לומר שהימים הראשונים
 היו טובים ומשובחים במעשיהם יותר מאלה הימים שהרי לא מחמת
 חכמה שבך שאלת על דבר זה כי אש ברוב כסילותך לפי שיש לך

להבין מעצמך מחוך ראות עיניך שבכל יום ויום העולם מתנה והולך. (א) טובה חכמה עם נחלה, הטובה וטובה חכמתו של אדם עם נחלה ונכסים שנשתיירו לו מאביו שלא יתקיימו בידו אם אין לו חכמה כדי לשמור נכסיו. ויותר לראוי השמש, וטובה החכמה יותר מן המזון לראוי השמש ההולכים ומתנהגים בעולם שחכמתן מסייעתן ועומדת להן. (ב) כי בצל החכמה בצל הבקף, לשון כפול על טובה חכמה עם נחלה שהרי במקום שיש שם חכמה יש שם עמה כסף ושאר עושר. ויתרון דעת, כפול על ויתור לראוי השמש יתרון של דעת היא שהחכמה נותנת חיים לבעלי שכל ידי חכמתו הוא מתנהג ומתפרנס בעולם ומגילחו ממעשים הרעים. (ג) ראה את בעשה האלקים, תן לבך לראות ולהבין במעשיו של הק' בעבור חסי' יראתו על פיך לבלתי תחטא ועל כן יליך מכל רע, כי מי הוא אשר בידו יכולת לתקן את המעוות אשר עוהו הק' ועל כן יש לבני האדם להתיירא מפניו כי אין מידו מליל. (ד) ביום טובה היה בטוב, ביום של טובה שלח לך הק' את ברכתו הטובה תקבלה: בשמחה ובטוב לבב. וביום רעה ראה, וכאשר ישלח לך הק' יום של רעה ליתן לך פורענות ראה וסבול פורענותך, דוס לפניו והתחולל לו וחס' לך כפרה. גם את זה לעומת זה. שאף את הטובה אשר נתן לך הק' הנה היא תשלום שכר לנגד המוזה אשר עשית ואת הרעה שלח לך ביום רעתך הנה היא תשלום שכר לעומת עבירה אשר עשית וכל המעשים הללו עושה הק' על אודות שלא ימלא האדם אחריו של הק' מאומה כי אם לדיק ומשפט שעל שמירות קיום מלותיו: נתן לו טובה ועל אודות עבירות שעבר נתן לו רעה. (ה) את הכל ראיתי בימי הבלי, בכמה דברים נתתי לבי לראות בימי של הכל בעיני העולם שיש לך לדיק בעולם שהוא לדיק יותר מדי והוא אובד ברוב דקו, כגון לדיק אחד שנכרג על אודות מזה קלה שאינו רואה לדרוש בעצמו וחי בהם ולא שימות בהם, ויש לך רשע בעולם שעבר על מזה קלה לפי שלא יהרג ודורש לעצמו וחי בהם ולא שימות

בהם ומאריך ימים ברעחו בשביל עבירה קלה שהוא עובר. ויש
 רשע, רשע זה אינו רשע ממש כי אם לדיק אבל על עבירה קלה
 זו שהוא עובר קוראו רשע. (יז) אל תהי צדיק הרבה, על אודות
 מעשים הללו אשר ראיתי אני מוכיחך שלא תהי לדיק הרבה ולא
 תהי חכם יותר מדי. למה חשומם, מן העולם שחיהרג על דבר
 קל ואל תהי רשע הרבה להיות סכל וכסיל ומלומד להרשיע, ולמה
 תמות קודם זמנך אם תרשיע כל כך, וטוב לך שתאחז בזה בלדק
 להיות לדיק וגם מזה מן הרשע אל תנח ולא תסיר ירך ממנו כי
 אוחז אדם שהוא ירא שמים יולא ידי חובתו בכלם שהוא שומר את
 עצמו שאינו לדיק הרבה ואינו רשע יותר מדי לפי שכל מעשיו עושה
 לשם שמים. השומם דוגמא חכמן כמו תבנה וחכמן עיר סיחון.
 (יח) החכמה תעז לרחבם, החכמה היא מגדול עוז לחכם לשמור
 את עירו כענין שנאמר ומלא בה איש מסכן וחכם ומלט הוא את
 העיר בחכמתו וגו' יותר מעשרה שליטים שהם בעיר לשמור אותה.
 תעז לרחבם, לא תחב המקרא החכמה תחכם לחכם כי אם לשון
 עוז תעז לחכם לפי שהוא אומר לאחריו מעשרה שליטים שהם מוסיפים
 עוז וכן לעיר. מעשרה שליטים, עשרה הללו אינן באין לדקדוק
 המלה לומר לא פחות ולא יותר שהרי הוא כמו מהרבה שליטים
 כמו ואפו עשר נשים לחמכם (ויקרא כ"ו. כ"ז) שלא נכתב לדקדוק
 המלה. (ט) כי אדם אין צדיק בארץ, ועכשיו אמרתי לך שאין
 דבר חשוב בעולם כחכמה, ועל כן זאת לבך להבין שהרי אין אדם
 חכם בארץ אשר יעשה טוב בכל ימיו שלא יחטא, ועל כן יש לך
 לשמור עצמך שמירה גדולה שלא תבא לידי חטא בקל וחומר מן החכם.
 אין צדיק, כמו אין חכם, את החכם קורא לדיק כמו שנאמר למעלה
 אל תהי לדיק הרבה ואל תחכם. (יב) גם לכל הדברים, אף
 במוסר זה הזהירך על המוסרים אשר הזהירךך של כל הדברים רעים
 שידברו אליך בני אדם אל תחן לבך להשיב להם דבר. אשר לא
 חשמע, שלא תעשה את עצמך להראות ששמעת את עבדך שהוא

מקללך והראש את עלמך כחרש כאלו לא שמעת. שהרי גם אתה יודע בעלמך אשר רבות פעמים קללתה אחרים ולא הי' רעוך שיעמוך דבר שקללתה כמו כן אתה תחנהג בעלמך כחרש כאשר יקללך עבדך. ביקללך, אינו לשון קללה כי אם לשון זלזול, שלשון קללה וברכה אינו נופל לומר בעבד כי אם לשון כיבוד ולזלזל כמו שנאמר בן יכבד אב ועבד אדוניו, והוא מגורת ואקל בעיני, ונקלותי עוד. (כג) כל זו נסיתי בהבמה, כל אודות דבר זה נסיתי ברוב חכמתי שהרי אמרתי בלבי שאחכמה בחכמות עמוקות והיא אותה חכמה עמוקה רחוקה ממני שאיני יכול להבין ולעמוד בה. (כד) רחוק מה שהי', עמוקה שהיתה כבר כגון כעשה מרבבה וספר יצירה רחוקה היא ממני שאיני יכול לעמוד בה ועמוק עמוק הוא אותו מעשה שלם כמה יחירה זו ומי הוא אותו שהוא ימלאנו ברוב חכמתו. (כה) סבותי, אה טורניי⁸) בלע'. סבותי אני וגם את לבי ודעתי סבותי להבין בעיני העולם לדעת ולחזר ובקש לבי לחקור חכמה וחשבון שהן בעולם ולדעת רשע של סכלות וכסילות של הוללות באותו רעה שהיא קשה ורעה מכל רעות שבעולם. (כו) ומוצא אני, ואני מלאתי דבר אחד בעולם שהוא יוחר ממות והיא אשה רעה ולבה מצודיה וחרמיה לצוד בני אדם להפילם בפחי מוקשי חרמיה. אסורים ידיה, וידי בית האיסורין לאסור בהן בני אדם ומי שהוא טוב לפני הק' נמלט ממנה שאינו נופל בידה, ומי שהוא חוטא נלכד בה. ומוצא אני, לפי שאמר למעלה ובקש חכמה נופל אחריו לומר לשון מליצה שבדבר שמוסב בו לשון בקשה מוסב בו לשון מליצה. מצודים וחרמיה, לשון מכמורת ורשחות. ימלט ממנה, ולהרבה לשון לכידה ומליטה מופל בה לומר לפי שהמשילה לפחים ורשחות כמו הליבו משחית אנשים ילכדו, משחית הוא לשון מכמורת כמו המליבו והמשחית, נפשינו כלפור נמלטה מפח יוקשים הפח נשבר ואנחנו נמלטנו. (כז) ראה זה

Jo tounat, id' iuanble mitch. (8)

מצאתי, כך אמרה נפש קהלת מאוחו שהוא מוכיחו ראה דבר זה
מלאחי בעולם בענין מלה אחת מלה אחת, כשהייתי מפשט
אוחו בזה אחר זו לחקור ולמלאו חשבון ענין חכמת העולם. אשר
עוד חכמת של מעשים בקשה נפשי ולא מצאתי, שהרי מלאחי
אדם אחד שלם במעשיו מאלף בני אדם ואשה לא מלאחי שלימה
וחמימה במעשיו. בכל אלה, אלף נשים. אמרה קהלת, יש לחמוה
למה לא נכתב אמר קהלת, ויש לפתור אמרה נפש קהלת כמו ויכל
דוד ללאת שפחה ויכל נפש דוד ללאת. (ט) לבר ראה זה מצאתי,
לבר מעשה זה מלאחי וראה וכן לב עליו אשר עשה וברא הק' את
האדם ישר וגאה שברא אוחו בדמוחו ובלמו ודם בני אדם בקשו
השבחות מוימות רעות לסור ממלכותיו של הק' ורעה רבה היא על
האדם. חשבונות, לשון מחשבות:

פרשה ח'

(*) כי בהחכם, מי הוא אדם חשוב בעולם כהחכם, ומי הוא
שודע פשר של דבר כמותו שאין לך דבר חשוב בעולם כחכמה שחכמת
אדם מאירה את פניו ומשמחו, ועוז קרן חומר פניו משתנה
בפנים להובות מרוב שמחת חכמתו. (ב) אני פי מלך שמואל,
חמיד אני עוסק לשמור דברות פי מלך הוא הקב"ה לשמור מצותיו.
ועל דברת שבועת אלקים, ועל אוחו דבר שאני נשבע בשמו של
הק' לומר כך אעשה בשבועת שמו הייתי שומר ומקיים. (ג) אל
חבהל מפניו חלק, לא חסי' בהול מפניו של הק' להחרחק מעליו
אבל לפניו חלק לשמור מצותיו, ואל העמוד ואז אל העמוד במעשה
ענין רע כאשר חשמו מצותיו כי כל אשר יחפוץ הק' הוא עושה.

ויעשה לך כל טוב אם חלך בדרכיו לעשות מצותיו. (ו) באשר
 דבר מלך שלטון, באותו מקום אשר דבר הק' שם שהוא מלך
 שם הוא שולט ומראה את שליטתו לעשות הטוב בעיניו. ומי יאמר
 לו מה תעשה, ועל כן יש לבני אדם לשמור מצותיו. שלטון,
 שם דבר. (ח) שומר מצוה, מי שהוא שומר מצותיו. לא ידע ולא
 יגיע דבר רע. ועת ומשפט, עת פקודת הדין שבה לעולם ידע
 לב חכם ועל כן הם שומרים מצותיו. (י) כי לבל חפץ, שהרי
 לכל חפצו של הק' יש עת לעשות. דין ומשפט כי רעת האדם רבה
 על עניו והק' ישלם לו שכרו, שהרי אינו יודע באותו דין אשר יהי'
 בו לבסוף מי הוא אשר יגיד לו את משפטו אשר ימלאהו באחריתו.
 כי לבל חפץ יש עת, כמו שנאמר ועת לכל חפץ תחת השמים.
 (ה) אין אדם שליט ברוח, אין אדם שליט בגשמיות ליום המיתה
 למוע נשמתו למוסרה למלאך המות, שאין לו ממסלת ושליטה ביום
 מותו. ואין משלחת, ואין כח בידו לשלוח משלחת חייליו להלחם
 עם מלאך המות שלא יקח נשמתו ממנו, שהרי לא ימלט רשע מעשה
 את עניו שהוא בעליו של רשע. לבלוא, למוע כמו ויכלא העם
 מהביא, לא תכלא רחמך. (ט) את כל זה, כל המעשה הזה
 ראיתי ונחתי על לבי בכל המעשים באותו העת שהאדם שולט בעניו
 לעשות מעשים רעים עתיד הוא לעת פקודתו שיהיו מעשיו רעים לו
 לרעה כחשלוש חגמולי מעשיו. ונחון, לשון פעול. (י"א) ובכן
 ראיתי רשעים, מוסב למעלה על כל זה נסיתי בחכמה, סבותי
 אני ולבי לדעת ולחור, וכן פתרונו לפי פשוטו ובכן שהייתי מחשב
 בחכמה ראיתי בעולם רשעים שראויים למיתה וקבורה שהיו באים
 והולכים ממקום קדוש וחורבות ורעות רבות היו עושים בו וסופן
 נשכח שמים ונכרס באותו עיר אשר כן עשו. גם זה הבל, עס שאר
 הבליים שלא נעשה ולא נשתלם להם דבר מעשה שכן רעתם מהרה
 שהרי על כן שהק' מאריך להם אפוא מלא לב בני האדם בעצמם
 לעשות רעה ואומרים מה הפסד יש לנו לעשות רעה לית דין וליח

דיין שהוא החוטא עושה רע זמן גדול עד מלא שנים והק' מאריך לו
אפו שהרי אף אי יודע שיהי' טובה ליריאי שמים היריאים ממנו ולרשע
לא יהי' טובה ולא יאריך ימים כלל עובר ועבור מן העולם לפי שאינו
ירא שמים. ובכן, כמו ובכן. רשעים קבורים, רשעים בעוון
בחיייהם קוראין קבורים לפי שהן ראוים למיתה כענין שנאמר ואחרי
חלל רשע נשיא ישראל. יהלכו, כפל מלה על ובאו. וישתבחו,
לשון שכחה ואי אפשר לפרש לשון מציאה שלא מצינו בלשון עברי לשון
מציאה כזה שהרי לשון חרגוס היא. גם זה הבל, אותו דבר שהוא
מכוסה מבני אדם שאין יכולין לעמוד על הבירור ואין יודעין על מה
הק' מאריך להם אפו כל כך קורא הבל לפי שבני אדם חוהין ומשחוממין
על הדבר. (יא) פתגם, דבר. (יב) מאת, מקרא קצר הוא 'ודבוק
הוא על הציבה החסירה לומר מאת ימים או שנים ולא אחר בלשון
מאת לדקדק מלחו כי אם לומר זמן גדול, וכן ושכורה ולא מין
דבוק הוא על חובה החסירה שכורה דבר אחר ולא מין. (יג) יש
הבל אשר נעשה על הארץ, יש דבר שבני אדם חוהין ומשחוממין
עליו והוא מהג בעולם שהרי יש כמה וכמה לדיקים בעולם שמגיע
אליהם כמעשה הרשעים שלא יהי' להם טובה ויש כמה וכמה רשעים
בעולם שמגיע אליהם כמעשה הדיקים שלא יהי' להם רעה כי אם
טובה גדולה עד מאד אמרתי שגם זה הבל, על זאת אני חוהה
ומשחומם. (יד) ושבתתי אני את השמחה, ואני משבח את השמחה
שאין דבר טוב לאדם בעולם כי אם אכילה ושתי' ושמחה לשמוח
בחלקו ומעשה זה יהי' מחובר לו בעצמו, בימי חייו שנתן לו הק'
בעולם. ילוננו, לשון חיבור כמו ילוח אישי אלי. (טו) כאשר נתתי,
כשנתתי לבי לידע חכמה ולראות עין העולם ראיתי בו הבל שהרי
אף ביום ובלילה לא ראה שינה בעיניו. כל המקרא הזה הולך
ומדבר על הלב כאילו הוא אדם שיש לו עינים והוא שנאמר במקרא
זה ולראות שהלב רואה את העין, וכן מצינו במקום אחר ראיה
בלב שנאמר ולבי ראה הרבה חכמה ודעת. שינה בעיניו איננו

רואה, שלא שכב לבו ולא הי' יסן, ומצונו לשון שינה בלב שגאמר
גם בלילה לא שכב לבו, חמי ישינה ולבי ער. (יז) וראיתי את כל
מעשה, ראיתי מעשיו של הק' שאין אדם יכול לעמוד על הבירור
ולמלא את מעשי העולם ולא ידע מידותיו של הק' שהוא מודד לבירות.
בשל אשר יעמל, באוחו דבר שיעמל האדם לבקש ולידע לא ימלאו
ולא ידעו בני האדם את מידותיו ומעשיו של הק' ואף אם יאמר
החכם לידע מעשיו ולא יוכל למלא ולידע לעמוד על דעתו:

פרשה ט'

(א) כי את כל זה, שהרי כל הענין הזה נחמי ללבי, ולבור
כל המעשה הזה שהרי הצדיקים והחכמים והעבדים שלהן כולם הן
במשלחו בידו של הק' ואף אהבחו ואף שגאחו של הק' אין יודעים
שאינו יכול להבחין איזה דבר אהוב לפני הק' ואיזה שוא. ולבור,
מגורת בר, כמו מן קס ולקוס, שב ולשוב. ביד, אייל"א אשטיל"א (")
בלע' כמו מחתת יד מלרים, מיד מלרים ומיד פרעה. גם אהבה
גם שנאה, שני גמין נוסגין לבוא בזה אחר זה בלא דקדוק מלה,
כמו גם בחור גם בחולה, גם לי גם לך. הכל לפניהם, כל
הרעות והטובות ומומנות לבוא עליהם ומקרה אחד לכלם. (=) הכל
כאשר לבל, פי' הוא של הכל לפניהם, כל הרעות והפורעניות
באות כמות שהן לכל בני האדם, ומקרה אחד לכולם הללו נדיק
ורשע וטוב וטהור וטמא וזבח כזה כן זה כטוב כחוטא וכן השבע
שבעות שקר כאותו אדם שהוא ירא לישבע שבעה כולם שוין. (ג) מקרה

אחד, לכולם וזהו ענין רע שהוא בעולם על אשר כולם שוין במקרה שלהם. ואף לב בני האדם מלא רע ורעות בחייהם לעשות רעות רבות לפי שאומרים בלבבם איזה הפסד יש לו לעושה הרעה כי מקרה אחד להם וזהו כן זה ואחריתו של כל אחד ואחד אל המחס שבכולם מיחה וזהו בהם ועל כן מחזיקים רשעים ברשעם שלא לשוב מדרכם הרעה ולאחר מיחה שוב אינן יכולין לשוב בחשובה ועל זאת נפלאותי מדוע מזה הדין מארכת להם אף כל כך ומדוע מקרה אחד לכולם. (י) כי מי אשר יחזיר, כי אוחז האדם שהוא חי ומחזיר אל החיים יש לו בטחון לעשות חשובה שבעודו בחיים יכול לשוב אבל לאחר מיחתו אינו יכול לשוב שהרי בלב חי הוא טיב מן הארץ המת, שלאחר מיחתו אין בו יכולת וכו'. (י) כי החיים יודעים שימותו, ועל כן יש להם לעשות חשובה בעודם בחיים והמתים אינם יודעים מאומה ושוב אינן יכולין להתחרט ולשוב בחשובה ולא יח' להם ריוח שכר והללה ברוע מעשיהם שהרי נשכח זכרם. (י) גם אהבתם שהיו אהבים הבריות וגם שנאתם שהיו שונאים כמה בני אדם וגם קנאתם שקנאו באחרים כבר אבדו כי מתו ונשכח זכרונם ולא יח' להם עוד חלק בכל אשר נעשה בעולם. (י-י) לך אכול בשמחה לחמך ושחה בלב טוב שכבר ראה הקב"ה כשרון מעשיך, ובכל עת יהיו בגדיך לבנים וטהורים להתנהג בטוהר ונקיון וזהו לך רשך להנחתך כי היו מנהגין הקדמונים בסיכת שמן, וראה חיים לשמוח בחלקך עם אשתך אשר אהבתה כל ימי חיך שנתן לך הק' בעולם כי דבר זה שאני מזהירך להנחתך הוא יח' חלק שלך בעמלך שאתה עמל בעולם, וכל אשר חמצא ירך לעשות טובות ומעשים טובים בעודך בחיים, שהרי לא יח' לך עוד לעשות מעשים וחשבון ודעת וחכמה בקבר אשר חלקך שם. כל ימי חיי הבלך, מופל מלחם פעמים. בבוחך, בעודך בחיים מוסב על בשאול אשר למטה. (יא) שבתי וראה, חזרתי וראיתי עוד דבר זה בעולם שהרי לא לקלים המרוץ, שאינו שוה

להם מרוצחם חדיר שזע"פ שהם קלים במרוצחם לרוך עת ופגע
 ומקרה יקרה להם כמו לשאר בני אדם, ולא יגבורים המלחמה
 שאין נלחון מלחמות עומד להם חדיר כי מקרה אחד להם, ואף
 לא לחכמים לדחם בכל עת בשביל חכמתם, ואף לא לגבונים עשר
 בכל עת ברוב חכמתם שפעמים שהם יורדין לעניות, ואף לא
 ליודעים הן בכל עת פעמים שאין להם חן ושואים הם בעיני הבריות
 שהרי מקרה אחד יקרה לכולם. (יג) כי גם לא ידע האדם,
 שהרי אף האדם לא ידע ולא הכיר שעשו ועשו כאשר יפול ברגים
 שנאחזים ונפלים במצודה רעה ובצפרים המפלגות והאחוזות בשח
 כי כאשר הם נופלים ונאחזים כן יוקשים ונשלים בני האדם לעת
 רעם כשחפול רעם עליהם בפתאום. יוקשים, כמו יקשים
 שברמי' (לשון) שבויים. (יד) גם זה ראינו, אף חכמה זאת ראיתי
 בעולם וחמי' גדולה היא אלי. (טו) עיר קטנה ואנשים בה
 מועט, אינו נריך לומר אם היא עיר חלשה ויש בה אנשים הרבה
 לשומרה או אם היא עיר חזקה ויש בה אנשים מעט לשומרה ויהי
 נר עלי' במצור מלך שאינו כל כך חשוב ואין לו חיל גדול כל כך אין
 חימה בעיני כל כך אם ימלטנה אם מסכן וחכם ברוב חכמתו כי אף
 היא עיר חלשה ויש בה אנשים מעט לשומרה ובה אלי' מלך גדול
 וחשוב בחיל גדול וסבב אותה במצור לבנות עלי' מודים גדולים וחזקים
 מולא בה המולא אם אחד שהוא דל ומסכן וחכם והוא ימלט את
 העיר ברוב חכמתו מן המלך הגדול ומרוב חילותיו וממלדיו הגדולים
 ועל כן נפלאחי וחמהחי אשר לבסוף לא זכר שום אדם את האיש
 הדל אשר מילט את העיר בחכמתו. (טז) ואמרתי אני משובחת
 וטובה חכמה של זה יותר מגבורה וסופו של זה שחכמתו בוי' ואין
 נשמעים דבריו. (יז) דברי חכמים, דבריו של מסכן וחכם זה נשמעין
 בנחת והוא שחכמתו של זה טובה ומשובחת מועק מלך מושל שהוא
 מושל ושליט על בני חילו שהם כסילים. על שם שאין להם חכמה
 להערים נגד האיש הזה שהוא מסכן וחכם קורא אותן בני כסילים.

(יח) טובה חכמה של מסכן וחכם זה יותר מכלי מלחמה של אלו
הגרים על העיר. וחוטא אחר, כשם שמסכן חכם זה ממלט את
העיר בחכמתו כך חוטא אחד מאבד טובה הרבה ודומה ומשול הוא
לזבובים שאין ראויים לגלום כי אם למיחה שמבאישים ומביעים
שמן מבוסס:

פרשה י'

(א) יביע, פתרונו לפי ענינו שמוהים ומקלקל השמן. יקר,
לשון כובד, יש רוע וכובד בסלילות וכסילות מעט יותר מחכמה ומכבוד
שזה החוטא מאבד הרבה טובה בכסילותו וסילוחו. (ב) לב חכם
לימינו, דיעת לב חכם ללכת בדרך ימין ודיעת כסיל ללכת בדרך
שמאל, כשם שיר ימין חסובה מיר שמאל כך המשיל וקורא לדרך
הטובה דרך ימין ולדרך הרעה דרך שמאל. ועל אשר כתב לב
חכם לימינו לשמאלו ולא כתב מימינו ומשמאלו נריך לפתור בענין זה.
(ג) וגם בדרך, ואף כשהסכל בדרך לבו חסר ומשחומם ומשחטה
ואמר לכל מחוך נכלותו ושטותו שהוא עושה הרי הוא כאמור לכל
שהוא סכל וכסיל לפי שבני אדם מכירים בכסילות מעשיו כך הולך
ומספר המקרא חשיבתו של חכם וגנותו של הכסיל. (ד) אם רוח
המושל, דעתו של מושל ושליט השולט עליך אשר ישים לך עלילות
דברים אל חנוח מקומך ולא חברה משם מחמת יראתו שהרי מרפא
לשוק שחפייסהו בפיוס דברך אשר תחחקן לפניו יגרום שהוא יניח
חטאים גדולים אשר חטאת לו ולא ישים לך עוד עלילות דברים.
מרפא, דוגמא ולשון חכמים מרפא (משלי י"ב). (ה) יש רעה
ראיתי, רעה אחת ראיתי בעולם שהיא כשגגה היוצאה מפי השליט

אשר יאמר לעבדיו עשו כך וכך לחלוחו או לעשות לו רעה אחרת
והם ילכו וחלו אשר לא חטא ולא פשע לפי שטעו בדבר השליט.
שהרי ניתן הכסיל הסכל במרומוים רבים להיות עשיר שר גדול וחשוב
והעשירים יושבים בשפל שהם דלים ושפלים. (ז) ראייתו עבדים,
פי' הוא של ניתן הסכל וגו' שהעבדים מתנהגים כאלוהים וקנינים
להיות רוכבי סוסים, והשרים הולכים כעבדים בלי רכיבה סוסים
שהעליונים למטה ותחתונים למעלה. (ח ט) חופר גומץ, הולך ומוכיח
אח האדם שאם יש לו אומנות אחר' שלא יעסוק באומנות הללו לפי
שפעמים שהוא עצמו נכשל בהן שלא יהא חופר שומות שפעמים שהוא
עצמו נופל ומח, כענין שאמרו רבותינו (פסחים כ"ח) גיראה בגיריה
מקטיל מדויל ידי' משחלים סדנא בסדנא יחיב מדויל ידי' משחלים,
ולא יהא פורץ גדרות שלא ישכחו נחשים המזוייני' בסדקי הגדר, ולא
יביע ולא יזין אבנים גדולות לפי שהוא נעצר בעצבון ולא יהא בוקע
עצים מחמת הטורה שהוא גדול ומתחמם באותה מלאכה חימום
גדול, וכן עושה הרעה פרי מעלליו יאכל כי זורע, עמל יקצור חון.
גומץ, לשון גומא ושומה. מסייע אבנים, דוגמא ויסייעו אבנים
גדולות. יסכן בהם, לשון חימום כמו וחהי למלך סוכנת. (י) אם
קרה הברזל, אם קהו חרבות של ברזל ונתקל והודע¹⁰ פיהם
והידודם והאדם לא חידד ולא. לטש את פניהם שלא היו מחודדין
ומלוטשין ואעפ"כ חיילים יגבר שותן החרב לב גבורה וחזק להגביר
כה ונאחז במלחמה כך היא שבחן של כלי זיין שאע"פ שאין מלוטשין
ועל כל זאת יש יחרון ושבה בהכשר חכמה יותר מהן. מקרא זה
כפול הוא על שנאמר למעלה טובה חכמה מכלי קרב. הברזל,
לשון כלי זיין כמו ונשל הברזל. קלקל, לשון לטישה וברק כמו נחש
קלל. (יא) אם ישך הנחש, אם הנחש נושך את האדם בשביל שהלוחש¹¹

¹⁰ צ"ל ונתקל ודורע.

¹¹ בב"י שם לוחש.

לא ליחש עליו לחש הוא מושך, ואין לו יחרון לבעל הלשון שידע ללחש ולא ליחש, כך הוא מוכיח לפי שיש לו ללחש על הלוחש לזמן לא יסוך הנחש. בלא לחש, לשון זה נופל על הנחש כמו נחשים לפעמים אשר אין להם לחש ונשנו וגו'. (יב) דברי פי חכם. דבריו של פי חכם שמדבר בנחת ובפיוסין כהוגן וכשורה הן מוחיין ומעייקין לו הן בעיני הבריות. ושפחות כסיל, כל שפה ושפה של כסיל שהוא מדבר בגבהות לב גאווה חבלע אוחו מן העולם שהוא נבזה ונמאס בעיני הבריות. (יג) תחלת דברי פיהו, זה הכלל תחילת דבריו של כסיל הוא סכלות וכסילות ואחרית דבריו הן הוללות רעה. (יד) והסכל ירבה דברים, הכסיל מרבה דברים של כסילות ואינו יודע ומבין הרעה אשר חבא ותגיע לו בסופו, וגם הרעה אשר חבא עליו פחאוס מאחריו כאשר ילך בדרכו אינו יודע כי מי אשר יגיד לו ועל כן יש להתרחק מן הכסילות. (טו) עמל הכסילים חייגענו, עמל של כל כסיל וכסיל חייגע אוחו שמחמת כסילותו הוא עיף ויגע כשהוא מחוץ לעיר עד אשר אינו יודע לחזור אל העיר. חייגענו, עמל נקרא בלשון נקיבה ועל כן נני... תי"ז¹²). (טז) אי לך ארץ, אי לך ארץ שאלך נער וכסיל ומחריב את העולם בכסילותו ונערותו. ושריד, שהן סמוכין וחופין על המלך אוכלין בבקר וברוב אכילתן מחריבין הארץ שאין עושין כלום ועל כן יש להתרחק ממלך נער. (יז) אשריך ארץ, אשרי לך ארץ שמלכך בן חורין חשוב וחכם לפי שהוא מקיים העולם בחכמתו ושריין החופין על המלך אוכלין בעת אכילת בני אדם ברוב גבורה שהם נלחמים עם האויבים כדי לקיים את הארץ ובעת אכילה באין לבתיאן ואוכלין. ולא בשחי, ואין עוסקין בשחיית יין ואכילות גסות, ועל כן יש לך לדבק במלך בן חורין לזמן ימי העולם מקויים. בשחי, לא שמעתי בו כלום מדוע לא ננקד בשחי מן שחי כמו קרי מן קרה. (יח) בעצלותם,

¹² כלומר משני שעמל היא נקיבה ע"כ. בתיב חייגענו בתי"ו לשון נקיבה.

בעללות של בעל הבית ימך וישפל המקרה לפי שחיו רוצה לתקנו.
 קירות הבית קורא מקרה על שהם שהן חזק תקרה הבית.
 ובשפלות ידים, בעללות שפלות ידים ידלוף דלק מן הבית מן הגשמים.
 ידלוף, כמו דלק טורד ביום סגריר. ימך, כמו ימך. (יג) לשחוק
 עושים להם, לאותן שעוסקין בשחוק יש להם להם ואת החיים משמח
 שחייך היין והכסף בעשיי הקניי ועיקר של מעשה כמו אשר יענה
 (מ"א י"ח כ"ד). את הכל שהלחם והיין קניי בכסף, ועל כן יש
 לטרוח למען יהי לו כסף. יענה, הוא לשון עשיי. (כ) גם
 במדעך, גם בקרוב לבך לא תחשוב לקלל מלך ובהררי מושכבך
 במקום ייחודך לא תקלל עשיר. כי עוף השמים, דבר זה לא
 דקדוק מלה הוא אבל כך הוא אומר אי אפשר שלא יהא גלוי וידוע
 לכל שהנחתו סופן להיות גלויים. ובעל הכנפים, כפל מלה
 על עוף: .

פרשה 'א'

(א) שילה לחבך על פני המים, לאותו אדם שחיה סבור
 שלא חיהה ממנו לעולם עשה לו טובה שהרי לרוב הימים גם הוא
 יעשה לך טובה. (ב) חן חלק לשבעה, לכמה בני אדם לשבעה
 בני אדם או אפי' לשמונה חן חלקים משלך אפי' כשהיה סבור שלא
 חיהה מהם שהרי איך יודע איזה מעשה של רעה יהי רעה על
 הארץ והיום או מחר חיהה מהם וחלטרך להם. (ג) כשם שאם
 יטלאו העבים גשם, שהם יריקו וישפכו על הארץ וכשם שאם יפול
 עץ בדרום או בצפון מקום שיפול שם יהי הוא כך אי אפשר שלא
 חיהה מאותן שחתן להם חלקים משלך. יהוא, יהא הוא. (ד) שומר

רוח, מי שהוא שומר ומלפני שיבא רוח בעולם לבי שוריעה יפה בשעת נשיבת רוח לא יורע הרבה שהרוח לא בא לנשכ כי אם לפעמים ומי שהוא רואה ומסתכל בעבים בשעת הקציר לא יקצור שכל בקר ובקר אי אפשר שלא יראה העבים ולא יפחד מגשם וממטר אבל אם אשר יוכל לקצור יקצור ולא יחטל מפני העבים אשר יראה בבוקר ביום זה ואם ימנע ביום מלקצור לפי שמתירא ממטר שמה היום לא ירדו גשמים כי אם למחר וכן יום ויום נמלא שהוא בטל ועומד.

(ה) כאשר אינך יודע, כי כאשר אינך יודע עצמים שבטן האדם שהוא מליאה כך אינך יודע מעשיו של הק' אשר יעשה שהרי לא חוכל להבחין מחי ירדו גשמים, ולא חסי' שומר רוח ורואה בעבים אבל חסי' (ו) בבקר זרע את זרעך ולערב אל חננה מלאכתך ואל חרף ממנה ועשה כל אשר חוכל לטרוח ולעשות במלאכתך שהרי אינך יודע אם זמן זה טוב לזרוע או זה אם שיהיה טובים כאשר ועל כן אין לך להחטל. כעצמים, לשון ועולם עיניו והן מחשבותיו של אדם. (ז) ומחוק האור, טוב מאור לעינים לראות מאור השמש אשר בעולם שהרי אם יחי' אדם שנים הרבה בעולם יש לו לשמוח ובלבד שיהא לדיק ויזכור בעולם הזה ימי החשך של מיחה למען לא יהי' חוטא בעולם הזה כי הרבה יהי' ימי החשך והמיחה, כל הימים שיבא בהם לעת המיחה יהי' לו להבל ורעה אם חטא בחייו. (ט) שמח בחור בילדותך, חסי' שמה בעת ילדותך וחסי' טוב לב בשמחתך בימי בחורותיך ללכת בדרכי לבך ובמראה עיניך וחדע שלבסוף יביאך הק' במשפט על כל אלה. בחורותיך, אונט'י'י'י'י'י'י'י'י'י'י'י'י'י'י'י'i' בלע'.

(י) והסר כעס מלבך, שלא חסי' רגון ולא תעשה רעה שהרי יר לב האדם רע מנעוריו. והשחרות, ככל מלה על הילדות ונקרא זמן בחרות על שם שער שהוא שחור:

פרשה יב'

(א) וזכור, וזהו' זכיר שזכור הבורא למען תמנע מחטא בימי הילדות לעשות תשובה. עד אשר לא יבואו, טרם יבואו ימי הרעה ימי הזקנה שחאמר במעשיך הראשונים אין לי בהם חפץ מחמת שלא חדע יום מיתחך ברוב חלשות של זקנתך ועל כן תהי' זריו לשוב בתשובה מקודם לכן. (ב) עד אשר לא תחשך השמש, טרם יהי' לך העולם חשך ומאופל שלא יאירו לך המאורות לפי שתהי' לך קרוב לזמן מיתחך תשוב בתשובה. ושבו העבים, טרם יבואו לך חושך אחר חושך תהי' זריו לשוב להק'. מקרא זה דוגמא אלבים שמים קדרות, ודוגמא שהעולם חשך להם ברוב לרחס. ושבו, לשון חזרה, כמו" שבתחילת גשם היו עבים בעולם ואחר כן ירדו גשמים והאיר העולם וגם עתה שבו העבים זהו חושך אחר חושך. (ג) והוא ביום שיהו חלים ויעים שומרי הבית הן הללעות המניחות על חלל הגוף והוא בסוף זקנתו שיהי' חלש עד מאד, והחזרתו שיהיו מעוותים ורחמים אנשי החיל הן השוקים שהגוף נסמך עליהם ובטלו המחנות שחלל השינים בטלות שהרי נחמטנו בכחן, וחשבו הרואות שחשבו העינים במקומן. (ד) וסוגרו דלתים בשוק, שנסחמו נקביו שמבחוץ. בשוק, נקבים החיצונים הפונים כלפי חוץ הרואים את השוק. בשפל קול המחנה, כאשר ישפיל קול ריחים הטוחנין מאלל מעיו והוא המסס. ויקים לקול הצפור, שמתירא ומתחבל מקולן. וישחו, קול שרים ושרות ישפלו בעיניו כענין שנאמר בצרילי הגלעדי לעת זקנתו שנאמר אם אשמע עוד בקול שרים ושרות. (ה) גם מגבוה, אף מדבר אחר שהוא גבוה מעט יירא ויפחד ויהי' חת וירא ממנו בדרך. וינאץ השקר, שיהא בולט

(14) ב"י זהו.

ממנו עגס קליבוסה" (הגק"א"י) בלע' מחמת כחישותו. ויסחבל
החגב, שיהיו עגבותיו לו לסבל ומשאוי. וחפר האביונה, וזהו
בטילה תלוחו, כי הולך לבית עולמו וימות וסבבו הסופדים לבכותו
טרם יגיעו עליו כל אלה לעת זקנתו יעשה חסובה. שיוועו, כמו
ולא קס ולא זע. בארובות, במקומות. ייראו וחתחתים,
דוגמא ואל תירא ואל תחת, יראה וחייתו סמוכין זה לזה. וחתחתים,
חיבה כפולה כמו ירקרק, אדמדם, פחלחל. וינאץ, אל"ף אינה
נקראת והוא לשון הגזו הרימונים. האביונה, לשון חלבה שיאמר
מן חבה לביון, כמו מן צבה לביון והיא באה ללשון נקיבה. (ו) עד
אשר לא ירחק, טרם יתק מכל שורחו של אדם ויתרוץ גולגלחו
ותבקע כריסו ויתרוץ הגוף בקבר. (ז) וישוב, הוא המשול לעפר
על הארץ להיות עפר והרוח חסוב אל הק' אשר נחנה בגופו, טרם
כל אלה ישוב בחסובה. ירחק, כמו ורחקות כסף. חבל הבסף,
היא השדרה. גולת הזוחב, הוא הראש שמתנין עלי' גולה ועטרה.
ותשבר בר על המבוע, כפל לשון על חבל הכסף, כי כאשר ייתק
חבל ותשבר הכד על המבוע לפי שהוא קשור וחלוי בו והוא הגל
שבחבל נופל ותשבר ומתרוץ.

(ח) חבל הבליים, עגשיו שלם הספר ואותן אשר סידורו
אמרו מכאן ולהבא לומר כל דברי העולם המהגין בו חבל הבליים
אמר קהלת. הקהלת, החכם. (ט) ויותר שה' חכם על חכמות
הללו עוד לימד אותה חכמה בעל פה. דעת, כדי שידעו ויחכמו
העם. ואון וחקר, נתן אוניו ולבו לחקור ענייני העולם ואח
החכמות ותיקן ספר משלי. (י) בקש קהלת למצוא, דברים טובים
של חפץ ולכתוב ספרים כחוב דברי יושר ואמת. (יא) דברי חכמים,
וכך ה' רגיל שלמה המלך לומר חכמים הן כדרבן הזה המלמד את

(15) כמו שפי' בגמרא' שבת דף קנ"ה ועיין רש"י ור"ק שורש שקר.

Hanche, Gölfe. (16)

הבהמה ללכת בדרך יושר, וכן השומע על דברי חכמה לא יסלק ולא יעקל ויקלקלו דרכיו. וכמשמורוח נטועים, כפל מלה כמשמורוח שהם נטועים וחשובים בראשי המקנה שהן דרבויות כך הם החכמים בעלי אסופות שמיישרים בני אדם להדריכם במעגל יושר וכל חכמותיהן נחנו מרועה אחד שכולן נאמרו מפי משה אשר שמעם וקיבלם מפי הגבורה. (יב) ויוחר מהמה, ויוחר ממה שהחכמים מזהירים אחרך בני הוחר שהרי אין קץ ויכולת לעשות ספרים הרבה לכחוב כל החכמות בחוכם. ולהג הרבה, כפל מלה ודברים הרבה של חכמה יגיעת בשר הן שאין בני אדם יכולין לכחוב כל ספרי חכמה. (יג) סוף דבר של חכמה הבל נשמע בכלל דבר זה אח האלקים ירא לשמור מזותיו שיהיו כל מעשיך לשם שמים כי זה עיקר מעשה של כל האדם. (יד) כי אח כל מעשה, אשר יעשה האדם הק' יביאנו במשפט על כל שגותיו ועלמותיו בין שהאדם רע בין שהוא טוב יביאנו לדין. סוף דבר וגו' חוזר ושונה כללו. בעלי אסופות, חכמים נקראים בעלי אסופות על שם בני אדם המתאספין לשמוע דבריהם. הוחר, הוי זהיר. ולהג, פחרונו לפי ענינו דברי חכמי ספרים. להג כולו שורש באותיותיו כמו לחך להב לעג לחש:

הרי נשלם
ספר קהלת

3) TranslationA commentary of Rabbi Samuel on Koheleth• Chapter 1.

Verse

1 דבורי קהלת , Solomon²⁹ is called Koheloth because he gathered³⁰ (קיהל) wisdom sayings from all the people of the East, and became wiser than any man; again, in another place he is called Agur because he collected³¹ (אגר) wisdom sayings, as it is said in the scriptures (Prov. 30.1) "The words of Agur son of Jakeh ...".

מלך , Because he was king in Jerusalem.

2. הנל הנלים אמר , As yet he has said nothing except the beginning of a sentence; and he repeats his expression to support and to state his message clearly viz. that everything is empty. This verse is an example of a certain type: "Not for us, O Lord, not for us" (Psalms 115.1), "The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up" (Psalms 93.3), "For behold your enemies, O Lord, for behold your enemies" (Psalms 92.10) where (the author) begins directly with a phrase and (then) mentions "The Name" because he is eager to mention "The Name", and he mentions it within his statement after which he begins again with the statement in order to state it

clearly. So here he mentions the name of Koheleth at the beginning of the statement after which he begins again with the statement and completes it. Koheleth did not say these two verses (beginning) דברי קהלת (and)

הבל הבלים ; rather it was the person who arranged the words as they are.

הבל הבלים , He had given his mind to the seeking out and examining of the affairs of the world and discovered them all to be empty.

3. מה יתרון , All these words refer to (the statement)

below³² - "There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink etc." (2.24) which is to say all the efforts of a man are futile and nothing will benefit him more than to drink and to be happy with his lot. מה יתרון , i.e.

What reward or gain has a man "in return for all the work in which he engages under the sun" since his end is that he passes away and ceases from the world and does not return. On this interpretation the word is used in its (usual) sense. תחת השמש , Because no one may

hide from its (the sun's) heat he uses this expression - the same as if he had written "under the heavens".

4. דור הולך ודור בא . "One generation comes and another goes.." for all of them die and return to dust.

והארץ לעולם עומדת "But the earth goes on for ever", i.e.

remains for it persists in its place.

5. וְזָרַח הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ . In the morning it rises in its place, in the east; and in the evening it sinks and sets in the west and travels all night long because it pants and hurries until in the morning it arrives at the place where it rose today. Again, tomorrow it rises there and travels during the day³³ from the east to the south and goes via south and west until, going round via the north, it arrives at its place in the east. וְסוּבָה , When the sun is in the north and approaching the east it is appropriate to use an expression indicating circuit.

6. סוּבָה סוּבָה הוֹלֵךְ הָרִיחַ . This is a statement repeating "... going to the south and going round ..." as though to say it goes round all the directions (הַרְחֹקוֹת) in the world. וְעַל סִבְיָנוּתוֹ שֶׁבַּ הָרִיחַ . Thus it is always going round in all its revolutions and circuits in that it returns and goes in all the directions in the world; but man is here today and in the grave tomorrow, his works cease for he is remembered no more; thus it is said "What advantage has man .." (1.3)

7. וְהֵימָּה אֵינָנוּ מֵלֵא . "... yet the sea is not full.." For if it were full the rivers would no longer flow into it.

. אֵל מְקוֹם שֶׁהַנְּחָלִים הוֹלְכִים שָׁם הֵם שׁוֹבִים לִלְכֹת .

".. to the place where the rivers flow they continue to flow."

And tomorrow they flow again into the sea for rivers do not leave off their habit and their flowing, but man leaves his habit and his way in that he passes from the world. Everything refers back to "What advantage ..." (1.3)

8. כל הדברים . All the acts (מעשה) of the world are weary, for no one can count or speak of them all. "The eye is not satisfied in seeing .." i.e. he (man) reflects and anticipates coming events. "... and the ear is not filled with hearing". - continually the ear listens and is eager to hear the things which are done in the world. "not filled" - since the ear is a hole the expression "filling" is appropriate. יגיעים means 'weary' and 'faint' (עיף ויגיע) (Deut. 25.18)
9. מה שהיה . And what advantage has man from all these (things) - whatever has already taken place shall again come to pass; whatever has already been done shall be done again for "there is nothing new under the sun."
10. For let us suppose there is something in the world of which a man may say to his neighbour: 'see this thing, it is new in the world'. His words are not true; for such an event has already happened before our time.
11. אין זכרון לראשונים . This is related to "what advantage has man ..." (1.3) לראשונים , i.e. men created before us in the world; they are not remembered,

for they are already dead and memory of them has faded.

וגם לאחרונים . The same is true of the successors who will come after us into the world; they will not be remembered among those who come לאחרונה , i.e. in the latter time of the late generations. For they will all die and be remembered no more. For if one man dies today there shall never be born another like him since men are not like one another. But other dead creatures are remembered, because if they die today their very type is born into the world tomorrow - Therefore those who see it say, "This creature is like that one which died". From this we may conclude that the other creatures are remembered, unlike men. Therefore it is said, "what advantage has man .." (1.3)

12. אני קהלת , "I, Koheleth .." "I was king"³⁴, and because of my high rank my mind was idle ...

13. .. and I applied it to seek and to search out by wisdom, the work of the world. And I discovered that it is an evil task which God (הק') has given to men.

עב is from the עב verb , and every instance of לעב is from עב ; it is therefore an idiom, just as we get קבין לקב (both) from קב , and בנב (both) from בנב , so we get עבין לעב (both) from עב i.e. both

express one basic thought.

14. רצון i.e. desire (רצון) of the spirit.
 רצון is from the verb רצה . Just as זמון
 is from זמה , רצון is from רצה and עזון from
 עזה . רצון i.e. "talent" in French.³⁵
15. מעוות לא יוכל לתקון . "What is crooked cannot be made
 straight". For if a man corrupts his deeds he cannot be
 reformed by his efforts before God (הק') as at the
 beginning. וחסרון לא יוכל . he repeats his
 expression. If he lacks anything that omission can never
 be counted or numbered with the surplus which remains.
16. דברתי אני עם לבי , i.e. pensai- mi in French (= I
 thought) על כל . i.e. and so I said. i.e.
 more than all the wise men who were before me in Jerusalem,
 before I was born.
17. דעת מה יעשה ישראל thus ולדעת . i.e.
 = "to know what Israel should do.." (1 Chron. 12.33)³⁶
 i.e. לדעת .
 מהולל , the meaning here is the same as הוללות
 the statement לשחוק אמרתי מהולל (2.2) ושכלות
 i.e. wisdom; he repeats his expression לדעת חכמה .
 רצון רוח , meaning 'desire' as in רעיון .
 And just as צביון is from צבה , אביון from
 , הגה from הגיון and עליה from עליון , אבה

so רעיון derives from רעה 'to desire'.

18. כי ברוב חכמה . For is it not that a person through great wisdom thinks and that deeply about what he observes and, as a result, is greatly vexed? ויוסיף , - a repetition of the statement because as he increases great wisdom and much knowledge he thinks and that deeply about the works of God (הק') which he does in the world - why he does them since he is unable to understand them; and as a result of his many reflexions he is vexed and increases sorrow.

Chapter II

1. פור פנשימי (pur pensai-mi = "simply, I said to myself")³⁷ לכה נא , "Go.." And so it means "to myself": O my heart, Go and enjoy yourself. אנסכה , contains the notion of honour and leadership³⁸ - I will live in princely gaiety, listening to the song of men and women singers that I may be joyful and glad of heart.
- והנה גם , i.e. with laughter and delight. בטוב
- הוא הבל , Even this thing was empty to me for what advantage had I in enjoyment and amusement.

2. מהולל , i.e. crazy. לשחוק . Concerning (על) amusement, I said that it is crazy, and of laughter I said, "What good does it effect and what advantage is there in it?"

ראה which is masculine gender refers back to לשחוק
 ולשמחה is connected with בטוב which is also masculine; and לשחוק ולשמחה is to be
 with אנסכה בשמחה . just as the phrase
 understood as על השחוק ועל השמחה , just as the phrase
 (Deut. 12.20; 15.6; 26.18) is to be
 כאשר דבר לך interpreted אמרי לי אחי הוא , and
 אמרי עלי אחי הוא (Gen. 20.13) must be understood

3. תרתי בלבי , I was searching and seeking within myself.

למשוך ביין , to indulge and enjoy myself with wine; a
 similar idea is found in ויין ישמח ללב אנוש (Ps. 104.15).

ולבי נוהג בחכמה , "while my mind guided me with
 wisdom", that is a wisdom in which there is no depth for
 it is always necessary. And so ולאחרז בסכלות repeats
 his meaning. But (in the words) כי ברוב חכמה which
 (we have) above (1.18) the wisdom is a profound wisdom
 which men neither need nor are experienced in. עד אשר

אראה , "till I should see .." since I do not know what
 to trust in order to follow it. איזה טוב , i.e. what
 good significance (ענין). מספר ימי חייהם , i.e.
 during their life.

6. צומח , has the idea of rearing.

7. מכל שה' לפני , more than all the men who were before me in Jerusalem, that is before I was born.

8. וטגולת מלכים , i.e. the desirable treasures of kings.

והמדינות , and the desirable treasures of the provinces.

עשיתי לי , i.e. I prepared for my needs, as in "and the calf which he had prepared" (עשה ; Gen. 18.8), and so in "... and she shall pare (עשה) her nails". (Deut. 21.12)

שדה ושדות . This is the שדה as in the phrase

"box, ark or trunk" (Tal. 8. Shab. 120a), and even a covered wagon for delight and beauty.³⁹

9. וגדלתי והוספתי , "I became great, and surpassed ...".

i.e. by wealth - doing all these things with my riches and my substance.

אף חכמתי . Wisdom too was mine. Yet both of them (riches and wisdom) are empty, in my opinion. And all (of this) is a clear expression of (the) section, for the three things which God (ה') gave to him - riches, wisdom and life - are empty to him. He mentions "riches" and "wisdom" in this passage that they are empty; and he mentions "life" below where it says: "I hated life etc." (2.17)

10. לא אצלתי , I did not become great apart from them (i.e. my eyes) for everything of significance which I saw,

I did. שדורי לבי ה' שמח , i.e. for
 my mind was happy. חלק זה ה' לי , i.e. , וזה ה' חלקי
 - This reward was mine.

11. "I turned.." to pay attention to all these
 things but I found them all empty which is what is meant
 by the verse above - "What advantage has man in return for
 all his toil etc." (1.3)

12. כי מה האדם , Because why should a man "who comes
 after the king" beg mercy of him or intercede for himself
 את אשר כבר עשוהו "that which has already been done",
 i.e. afterwards, for his verdict has already been decided;
 for after the judgement has been decided it is hopeless;
 so it is empty (futile) that he should come after the
 verdict to ask for favour.

13. וראיתי אני "And I saw.." because I had given my
 attention to this matter. לחכמה , the lamedh has a
 pathah. This is the common and necessary wisdom which has
 no depth. לחכמה is really להחכמה - that wisdom to
 which we are accustomed. But if ל is vocalised with
 hataph then the term חכמה , the deep and extra wisdom,
 is (to be) understood. Wisdom is likened to light, and
 folly to darkness. And this is what the verse says

14. החכם עיניו בראשו וגו' , for he is careful to walk in
 the light and (so) does not fall. והכסיל , "But the

fool" walks in darkness and (so) falls; nevertheless although this is so, it is also true that both die in the same way.

15. גם אני יקרני , for I shall die just as the fools, so what advantage had I in being wiser than them? This also is a frustration, and on this subject the verse says, "what advantage has a man". (1.3) i.e. the wise man beside the fool, for neither one nor the other will be remembered since in the time to come everything will have long been forgotten.

16. אין ימות , This is a great disadvantage, that the wise man should die with the fool. In every place in scripture where אין occurs it is a matter which is fulfilled as e.g. אין היתה לשמה (Jer. 50.23; 51.41) and אין בהפכת לי סורי הגפן בכרי' (Jer. 2.21).

17. החיות , i.e. the animal life (החיות) which God (הק') gave to me. For it was one of the three things which God (הק') had given him. שבאני , because I approved of nothing throughout my long life except that "everything is empty", both my gain and my riches.

18. שאני עמל תחת השמש , like תחת השמים "beneath the heavens" (as in 1.13; 3.1) אחרי' .⁴¹ He is speaking about himself because he does not want to hang

death curses on himself.

אחריו may be said to refer

to money.

19. ומי יודע . "Who knows" about my son who will succeed me - whether he will be a wise man who will rule over all that I have gained, since my riches shall be in his possession, (or) a fool, in which case my gains and riches shall fall from his grasp into the power of others.

גם זה הבל . for if he is a fool, what I gained will disappear from his possession, and it will be discovered that I toiled for it in vain.

- 20- ומבנתי אני . Therefore I turned and despaired in
21. my mind about all my gains; for you have a man in the world like me who has endeavoured by wisdom, knowledge and skill to acquire money yet God (הק') gives it to the man who has not bothered with it. גם זה הבל , the first man had troubled himself for nothing.

- 22- כי מה הוה לאדם , i.e. for what actual gain has the
23. man who bothers himself about it? For all his days are painful and his whole manner is fretful, because he is continually planning to acquire money. Even at night, when he is lying upon his bed, his mind is not resting but is continually planning that the money should not escape or disappear from his possession; which is what the verse

says below: "He who is satisfied with riches has no rest etc." (5.11)

24. אין טוב באדם שיאכל . There is nothing good in the affairs of man except that he eat and drink and so find enjoyment in return for his gains, i.e. his money with which he busied himself. But this latter word is from God (השמים); there is nothing empty about it, but all these words which I have related above, all are empty words.
25. כי מי יאכל . For who is worthy to consume and to hasten⁴² to enjoy the results of my toil except me? Therefore one should eat and drink and find enjoyment in one's gains.
26. כי לאדם שטוב לפניו , to the man who is "good" before God (הק'), like me, God (הק') has given luck to accumulate money, for both his needs and his enjoyment; but to the "sinner" God (הק') has given the task of gathering money for the needs of another who is good in his opinion, illustrating⁴³ that both a wicked man and a righteous man shall be prepared; and so we see that it is on behalf of the wise man that the sinner busies himself; therefore I ought to eat and drink and enjoy my gains.

Chapter III

1. לכל זמן , all actions have their appointed time
 (זמן) and every business under the heavens has its
 opportune time (עת) - evil times and good times to pay
 creatures their reward according to their work, payment
 of evil and payment of good, i.e. evil times and good
 times. I shall subsequently explain the "times".
2. עת ללדת . On one occasion one is born (גולד),
 on another, one dies. "A time to plant", that is in time
 of peace; "and a time to uproot", that is in time of war.
 And thus are all these "times" included in a time of war
 and a time of peace with the exception of "a time to be
 born", and also "a time to be silent and a time to speak"
 according to the plain sense of the passage. It is
 therefore written at the end as if to say: This is the
 general rule - a time of war and a time of peace.
9. מה יתרון העושה . This refers to "but to the sinner
 he gives the task of acquiring .." (2.26) as though to say:
 since (there are) times for good and times for evil and also
 (for) this sinner a time when he is acquiring money, and a
 time when he loses possession to give it to the man who is
 good, what advantage has the one who acquires (it) since he

toils for and bothers himself about this money after which
 he loses possession (of it). . העושה , i.e. האוסף
 "he who gathers" like the usage in עשה לי החיל הזה
 "... has gained me this wealth". (Deut. 8.17)

10. הענין i.e. המנהג - the habit, custom;
 לענות , i.e. להתנהג - to conduct oneself, behave.

11. את הכל . God (הק') has made and set in order all
 the appointed times (הזמנים), each one proper and
 suitable in its time (עת) and season (זמן). גם
 גם את הזמן , i.e. "also the appointed time.."
 God (הק') has put in the minds of men that they may know
 and understand that there are times appointed for both good
 and evil, because man may neither discover nor know what
 God (הק') does from beginning to end. For if all the
 appointed times were for good or all for evil man would
 not repent before God (הק'), because he would think in
 his mind: Since there is one happening in the world, or
 everything is good, or everything is evil and I abandon my
 evil deeds because of it, what enjoyment would I have in
 repentance. מראש ועד סוף , from the beginning of
 time (עת) to the end of time.

12. כי אין טוב . "For there is nothing better" in all⁴⁴
 these times and actions than this - "... but to rejoice etc."
 Which is what was said (before) - "There is nothing better

for a man but to eat and drink etc." (2.24)

13. מתת אלהים . This gift is from God (הנשמיט) who gave⁴⁵ him time and fortune to do well for himself.

14-15. כי כל אשר יעשה . All times are in the power of God

(הק'). "And God has made.." evil times and good times in order that men should fear him and repent and say: Whatever has already happened in former times, which were different times, now it is in force today, whether some custom or arrangement; and a custom which shall exist in the future already has existed in days gone by. For God (הק') sought out the persecuted to give him the money with which his persecutor busied himself.

16. ועוד ראיתי , "Moreover I saw.." this in the world that "the place of judgement" was an empty idea; for where righteous men are expected to act justly, "there is wickedness" in that wicked men come to cut off the righteous men from their place and settle in their stead.

ומקום הצדק , this repeats the (previous) expression.

שמה הרשע . the same word as הרשע but the soph pasuq opens the ר , as we have in זָבַח - זָבַח , and

הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצִי שִׁמְעַ (Ps. 150.5) where שִׁמְעַ is in pause.

17. (הק') God , I thought it out thus: אמרתי אני בלבי judges righteous men just as he executes judgment and justice among wicked men. Because righteous men sin in some of their actions they are expelled from their place and wicked men enter in their stead. For every business of God (הק') has a fixed time to be fulfilled,

ועל כל המעשה , "and concerning every work" that is that man does. שם , They sentence him according to his works in the place in which he sinned. And the general situation is such that everyone is judged together.

18. על אנות (על אנות) men who sin, i.e. concerning (על דברת) על דברת , God (הק') engages in selecting (לברותם) them from the world, and causes them to see that they are considered as beasts.

לברם . This is the Piel (משקל חזק) of the root of ברות in "And I will purge out from among you those that rebel and transgress against me." (Ezekiel 20.38) i.e. from the verb ברה . And as לכלם is said to be from לכלה , as the verse says: בחימה לכלה (Ezek. 13.13) - another example being לעלה - לעלם

לברה - לברם represents the Piel; ר however cannot take a daghesh. However from לברות in the Piel we expect לברותם -- לכלות , as, for example, לברותם - לכסות , לעלות - לעלותם . And it cannot be

said to derive from נר ; if that were so it would have been להנירם i.e. in the Hiphil on the analogy of

.. להסירם - ⁴⁶סר , להקימם - קם . להשיבם - שב

i.e. what is realised about them, viz. שהם .

"they are beasts". בהמה המה

19-
20.

כי מקרה אחד . For man and beast have the same fate and the same habit in that they both die with the same significance - they have the same spirit and the same life. ומותר האדם , man has absolutely no advantage over beast - for everything is empty - for both are equal. Man and beast go to the same place - they came from the dust (and) they shall return to the dust.

21.

מי יודע , - refers to "and all have the same spirit" (3.19) as if to say: I say that both have the same spirit because who knows that the spirit of man goes upwards and the spirit of the beast goes downwards. This is why I say that they have the same spirit and that everything is empty; for what advantage has man over beast?

22.

וראיתי . I examined every aspect and perceived that there is nothing better for man than this:- that a man be happy in his works, eating and rejoicing in his lot, for this is a good share for him while he lives. Because who shall bring him ⁴⁷ into the world after his death that he may know and witness his son who shall follow him (and) who

shall inherit his property - whether that property will be established in his possession? Perhaps his son will be a fool and his property will not be established in his possession; therefore it is better for a man to eat and to drink and be happy while he lives.

Chapter IV

1. ושבתי אני , Once more I saw all the oppressed whose money is taken forcibly from them; they were weeping and had no-one to comfort them, to retrieve their money.

ומיד עושקיהם . Since they (their oppressors) had the power there was none to comfort them. Thus it fits in with his statement - "Everything is empty"; for how have they transgressed that their money is taken forcibly from them?

2. ולשבח = ושבח אני "and with regard to praising", I am wont to praise the dead who are already dead rather than the living who are yet alive, because the dead have already departed from all trouble and evil intrigue, but the living are still troubled by everlasting futility.

עד הנה , i.e. עד הנה = "hitherto".

3. ומה טוב משניהם , Much better than both these categories is he who has not yet come into the world for he has not experienced these evil deeds which are in the world.

4. כִּי הִיא קִנְיָת אִישׁ , i.e. improvement of work. "that it is (due to) envy" which a man has of his neighbour. This too is empty. Why is he envious of him - of his wisdom and of his riches? What can he forcibly take from him if God (הַק') has given him happiness - what does the one who is envious have, and how has he transgressed?
5. הַכֹּסִיל חֹרֵק אֶת יָדָיו , i.e. he does no work with which to support himself; "and eats his own flesh". Because of this he has nothing to eat except his flesh; for he is proud and lives (in this way) because he has done no work with which to support himself. Therefore a man ought to work in order to make an honourable living.
6. טוֹב מְלֵא כֶּף בְּנֶחֱת , It is much better for a man to have a handful of money with contentment (בְּנֶחֱת) so that he might make an honourable living, "than both hands full with toil"; for a little money is better for him than a lot of it with toil (בְּעֵמֶל), for he would not make an honourable living with it.
- 7- רִשְׁתִּי אֲנִי . Again I saw an empty work in the world.
8. You have a man in the world who busies himself and is eager in his earning, who does not want a second man to help him since he would take his share with his goods and his earnings. גַּם בֶּן רֹאֵת אֵין לוֹ , This repeats the meaning. Because he does not want an associate to help

him and to share with him there shall be no end to his toil working alone, and he shall not achieve his heart's desire; also his eye shall not be sufficiently satisfied with the sight of his riches for him to reckon to himself: For whom am I toiling so much and depriving myself of pleasure?

גם זה הבל . "This too is empty" since he does not reckon so, but busies himself and earns more than necessary, and deprives himself of pleasure.

9. טובים השניים . Two men are better, for they associate with each other in working at their trade and in their toil; better, that is, than the individual who toils and busies himself privately. שכר טרף , in that they produce a large profit.

10. כי אם יפול . For if one or other falls, the one shall lift up his fellow; but woe to him who toils alone, for if he should fall, and there is no second party to raise him up, then woe is that individual. If they are two in harsh winter days then they may warm each other if they both lie together; but if one lies alone how shall he be warm? Therefore the verse says: "Two are better than one". (4.9)

אי לך ארץ , i.e. . אי לך . And so we have

שמלכך בער (10.16) where the interpretation is "Woe

(אי) to you O land".

12. ואם יתקפו האחד . For if one should come in from the street, as for example a thief, and commit robbery - for he would come in upon this man to rob him of his money - then if two men face him he would not be able to strike them both; he would have no success with two human beings. And if there were three neighbours who associated together then they would bear up considerably and, like a triple cord, not be broken quickly.

התוקף עבדו של חברו⁴⁸ , as we have in יתקפו in the language of the Mishnah (B. Talmud, Baba Mezia 64) also in the sense of the scripture verse: חִזְקָתִי וְתוֹכִל (Jer. 20.7) "You are stronger than I and have prevailed".

13. טוב ילד מסכן ורחם . A youth who is poor (עני) and wise is much better than a king who is rich but who is old and foolish, who no longer knows, or understands how to be careful and wise because he is a fool. Both ideas are illustrated in the verse: "Woe⁴⁹ is my people; they know me not - they are foolish children etc" (Jer. 4.22) מסכן I am unable to interpret it as 'wise', to see it as a doubling of the expression, as a known attribute of a wise man - cf. הלאל יסכון גבר (Is. 40.20) המסוכן חרומה (Jb. 22.2) - because there is a Tifha accent beneath מסכן to separate it from רחם . ילד , the word corresponds here to זקן ; מסכן to ממלך ; and רחם to וכסיל .

14. **כי מבית הסורים** . For an old and foolish king came from the prison house (**האסורים**), i.e. his mother's womb, to become king in the future; for after he was born the glory of the kingdom fell to him. A poor and wise boy also comes from his mother's womb; perhaps the glory of a kingdom will fall to him today, or tomorrow as in the case of the former one, and the boy is found to be better than him; for (the boy) was wise while the other was a foolish king.

הסורים , for **האסורים** , and so the **ס** is pronounced without a daghesh (**נרפי"ת**). Occasionally an **א** drops out of a word as, for example, in **לא יהל שם ערבי** (Is. 13.20) where **יהל** is for **יאהל** .

כי גם במלכותו נולד . For even in the kingdom of this old foolish king there is born to him a poor and foolish son like himself.

- 15- **ראיתי את כל החיים המהלכים תחת השמש עם הילד** . This
16. is the second one who was about to be king in his father's stead, but who was a fool like his father. I saw also "that there was no end of all the people" i.e. of all the former generation who lived in the time of this man's father, for they were not happy with him because of (his) folly. That generation was⁵⁰ before these latter (people) who were forced to work for this man's son who was poor

and foolish. Nor will these latter (people) "be pleased" with his son on account of his great folly. This too is empty. For they were foolish kings and the generations were forced to work for them.

עם הילד השני , i.e. his son - he who was born is termed שני because he was a second foolish king, in place of his father.

17. שמור רגלך . Watch your foot; for you should walk in purity and in innocence and in humility. You should even go barefoot when you go to seek God (אלקים), to pray in the Temple, as the verse says: "Take off your shoes from your feet for the place etc." (Exod. 3.5)

וקרוב לשמוע , And God (והק') shall be nearer to you, listening to your prayer, than to the fools presenting sacrifices. These fools do not know to do good deeds, therefore they are willing to do evil.

Chapter V

1. אל תבהל את פיך . when you pray before him do not be over-hasty, in your prayer, to utter a lot of words before God (הק'). For he is in heaven; therefore you should fear him if you multiply words in his presence. Let your words be few that you may not stumble in your many words.

This is what the verse says: "With a lot of words transgression does not cease." (Prov. 10.19) And also as the sages say: "All who multiply words bring about sin." (Aboth. 1.17)

2. כי בא החלום . For a dream is what a man dreams at night because of his many transactions and ways which he thinks about during the day. This is what the verse says: "Your thoughts came to you upon your bed." (Dan. 2.29) But futile and empty is his dreaming. Thus (the verse continues) "... the voice of the fool (comes) with many words". They are empty and void, for through the spate of his words it is realised and recognised that he is a fool. Hence you must reduce the number of your words in order to shun folly.
3. כאשר תדר גדר . "When you make a vow .." to God (להיק) at the time of your prayer . אל תאחר לשלם , Thus it is customary to make a vow at the time of prayer, for God (הק') does not like fools who vow but who fail to pay. Therefore I say to you "pay whatever you vow"; because far better is he who does not vow at all than he who vows but fails to pay.
5. אל תתן את פיה , "Do not permit your mouth .." to increase words before God (הק') with your much talk, to the extent of bringing guilt upon yourself (עצמך)

for "whoever multiplies words brings about sin". (Aboth. 1.17). And, after your many words, do not say before God (הק') that an error was the cause of the majority of your words - for all your thoughts are revealed and known to him - because you multiplied words deliberately and wilfully. Why should God (הק') be angry at the sound of your many words - empty, void, mere nothing - and damage and destroy your effort, the work of your hand, which is the origin and the very source of your deeds.

מלאך , i.e. . להחטיא . , that is for להחטיא
the angel of God (הק')

6. כי ברוב חלומות , For through many dreams, empty concerns and much talk, men pass away and disappear from the world. This is why the verse says: "... lest God (האלקים) be angry etc." (verse 5)

כי את , But fear God (האלקים) by not multiplying words.

7. אם עושק . If you see oppression of the poor and the deprivation of justice and right - that is to say, the robbing the poor of his money, on the one hand, and, on the other hand the robbing of an associate of his justice the distortion of his judgement - in order that he may lose his money

אל תתמה . "Do not be surprised" at men's affairs

in these things, for there is another high official above the official who forces money from the poor and distorts justice and right; he in turn shall take away the latter's money.

וגבוהים עליהם , There are high officials in the world who are powerful, whose power is great over these (afore-mentioned) officials; for they also rob them of their money, and pervert the justice and right of these officials who have robbed others. Thus God ('הק') organises and directs his world. Like the Midrash Aggadah⁵¹ on ". Show me thy ways etc." (Exod. 33.13) . שומר , for the second official kills the first official when his time comes to rob him of all his possessions, and to pervert justice.

גזל , is a noun whose accent is beneath; when it is in construct it is generally pointed with a pathen-qaton with its accent above, the same is true of גזר .

8. ויתרון ארץ בכל . "The advantage of (the) land for all" men is that they must all alike till the soil in order to live, and make a living from the work of their hands. Even the king must till the land of a cultivated field - in that he commands his people, compelling them to till the land for his requirements and so is called a tiller of land.

9. אהוב כסף . "He who loves money" more than enough
will never at any time be satisfied with his money.

ומי אהוב בהמון , a repetition of the sense -- he who
loves wealth shall not receive much interest on his money
as he is a coveter.

גם זה הול , like the man who is busily engaged in
acquiring more than enough money; he has enough if he is
able to make a decent living without great wealth.

לא תעבורי just as תבואה , the same as תבואה
(Ruth 2.8) is like לא תעבורי , and תשמורם in the
book of Proverbs (14.3) is like תשמורם .

10. ברכות הטובה . As many and great goods are in the
possession of a man by means of much money, because he
busies himself more than enough to obtain much money; when
that money is great, consumers of it increase and he spends
his money, for as he earns his needs increase, as our great
men have said ⁵² ברכת הבית ברובה (B. Tal. Baba Bathra,
144b) "The blessing of a house consists in the numbers of
its inmates".

מה כשרון . What advantage (יתרון) and gain
(כשרון) has the owner of this great wealth". Why does
he bother himself more than is necessary? He gets no
enjoyment except the seeing of his eyes in that he sees
the goods in his possession, but he has no profit or

return for it.

11. מתוקה שנת העובד . The sleep and time of a tiller of the ground is good because he can eat as a result of the tilling of his soil, whether little or much.

והשבע לעשיר , "But the surfeit of the rich man" - because he has great abundance and much wealth the riches do not permit him to sleep, but he continually thinks about his money lest it be destroyed as the verse above says "Even at night his mind does not rest" (2.23)

- 12- חולה , i.e. "enfirme"⁵³ in French. (= sick)
13.

עושר שמור . "Riches are kept" and concealed for the owner's needs but to his disadvantage, not for his benefit. When he is busy acquiring money he reckons he is obtaining it for his benefit, but it turns out to be to his disadvantage, for (a man) may be killed or captured on account of his money and those riches are lost in an evil venture. He cannot profit from his money or beget a son after this because he possesses nothing and would have nothing to give his son, to bequeath to him or leave him as an inheritance.

14. כאשר יצא מבטן אמו . "As he came from his mother's womb" heloless and poor; as he had nothing when he was born so he shall return naked and wanting to his grave. He shall not take anything with him; his money has

perished. שיוולך is the same as שיוולך .

- 15- 54, This too is a grievous evil with all these
16. things above: everyone in respect of that matter who comes
into the world at birth, wanting, poor and naked, shall so
depart from the world at his death. (בסופו)

ומה יתרון לו , "And what advantage has he" in return
for all his money, for which he busied himself and laboured
in vain. This is not the only thing that happened to him;
his life was spent completely in darkness and was full of
much vexation, sickness and grief due to his much deliber-
ating while he was acquiring his money.

17. הנה אשר ראיתי אני . Behold this thing (דבר) which
I have seen is clear, that it is good for a man to eat and
drink and enjoy himself in return for his earnings, that
he should be glad with his lot while he is alive from his
earnings for which he has busied himself during his life -
from the money which God (הק') has given him; for that
is his lot, i.e. this thing (דבר) is his lot and you
have no better thing than this. This is what the verse
says above: "There is nothing better for a man than that
he should eat and drink etc." (2.24)

18. גם כל האדם . Of all the deeds which men do, this
one is by far the best - that every man to whom God (הק')
has given riches and also the power to control his riches,

should enjoy and accept his lot from him that he might be glad in his lot and with his earnings - reckoned by him to be the granting of a gift to him from God (השמים)

19. כי לא הרבה , For not many days after his death, he, who was mindful of his money which he left, and his works which he did while alive, shall not remember. Even after his death he shall have nothing from that man to whom he bequeathed goods and money. כי האלהים . But (אלא) God (הק') gave him this money in order that he might sing and be glad and rejoice in his lot while alive.

מענה , Hiphil participle; the root idea is rejoicing and singing, as (the root is used) for example in ותען להם מרים (Exod. 15.21) and וענתה השירה (Deut. 31.21)

Chapter VI

1. ורבה היא , And a great evil is upon man.
2. איש , "a man" to whom God (הק') grants great riches but who has neither the ability nor power to enjoy and benefit from them; rather, a stranger, who took no pains with them, shall enjoy them. This is an empty work - why did the other man bother himself?

3. אם יוליד איש . "If a man begets" - since a stranger has consumed his money - up to a hundred children, and lives many years. וְרַב שִׁיְהִי יָמָיו שְׁנִיךְ , this phrase merely repeats that he lived many years, and his soul is not satisfied with the goods in his possession; further, if at the time of his death, he is not handed over for burial, I say that the abortion, which has not seen light and was not born alive, is much better off than he. For it enters the world in emptiness and leaves it in darkness; and its name is covered in darkness. For the entire circumstances of the man, whose money perished and who was not handed over for burial, were in emptiness and darkness, seeing that he did not experience good things; but the abortion has neither good nor ill.

 אם יוליד איש מאה . Since he has mentioned at the end of the verse (3) the abortion whose birth was in emptiness and was covered, he connects his expression with many births and the significance of a hundred children.

5. גם שמש לא ראה . Since the abortion did not really arrive and did not know anything nevertheless it is better off than he; for the abortion experienced neither good nor ill, whereas this man experienced nothing but evil every day. "It has not seen the sun" - and, like the abortion, he does not observe (חָזָה) the sun.

6. וראלי חל. If he lived two thousand years and did not experience good things, he would be no better off, since everything goes to the same place.
7. כל עמל האדם לפיהו , For no one busies himself except it concerns his eating.
 וגם הנפש לא תמלא , Since every day he desires to eat.
8. כי מה יותר . For what advantage has a wise man over a fool in the world seeing that they both live and continue in the world in the same way; therefore I said, "Everything is empty".
 מה לעני ירדע . In what way does the poor man begin to fall short of the wise man, seeing that he knows how to live in the world with the rest of the living, like one of the wise men?
9. טוב מראה עינים . You have a man in the world for whom the sight of his money is good - simply witnessing and observing it, better, in fact, than eating and satisfying his appetite. This too is empty.
10. מה שהיכבר He who was a rich man, whose name was cited, and who was known to be important and mighty, at the time of his death he will be unable to argue and contend with the angel of death for the latter is stronger than he. Therefore I say: Everything is empty.

11. כי יש דברים . For there are things (of) which
men speak an abundance of words, which bring man to misery,
"for whoever increases words occasions sin" (Aboth. 1.17).
What advantage is there in a multitude of words? There-
fore I say: Everything is empty.
12. כי מי יודע . For who knows what is a good thing
for a man to do in this world? If he knew how to select
the practice of good he ought to act upon it, but none of
them act thus in that they spend their empty life like a
passing shadow; they do not want to live a good life
therefore they die before their time; but one ought to
practise good works, for who can declare what shall take
place after his death or (what shall happen) to his sons
who come after him? Therefore he should perform good
deeds, so that his sons after him might be blessed.

Chapter VII

1. טוב שם משמן טוב . Far better is the good reputation
of a man than the good oil of the balsam tree, whose scent
disperses. (He mentions this) because we find in another
place an explicit text which compares and praises repu-
tation to good oil, viz. שמן תורק שמך (Song of Songs
1.3), so do not be surprised at both being compared and

praised together in this verse.

ויום המות מיום הולדו , And much better is the day of a man's death than that of his birth, because in the day of his death his evil deeds cease and he sins no more; whereas the day of his birth is evil to him, for he is born for toil, as the verse says כי אדם לעמל יולד (Job 5.7). Further, because there is no man who does not sin, the day of a man's birth is evil to him.

2. טוב ללכת . It is preferable that a man should go to a house of mourning than to a house of feasting, for the house of mourning concludes the death of all men, and a living man going there allows his thoughts and mind to dwell upon the death of a man, and as a result he refrains from sinning; but when he goes to be merry in the house of feasting, he sins, and that as a result of his merrymaking.
3. טוב כעס משחק . Sorrow is preferable for a man, for he controls his thoughts to reflect upon the subject of death, the end for all men, and does not make merry; (preferable) than that he should engage in the merriment of the house of feasting. For with a sad countenance, which he has owing to the fact that he reflects on the subject of death, his mind is made glad seeing that he does not sin.

4. לב חכמים בנִית אבֵל . "The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning" that is, proceeds to; for as a result of this they allow their minds to dwell upon the day of death, and (so) do not sin.

 ולֵב כְּסִילִים בְּנִית שִׁמְחָה . 'The mind of fools is in the house of feasting and, as a result of their merrymaking, they commit sin, for they do not place the fear of God (אֱלֹקִים) before their eyes.

5. טוֹב לִשְׁמוֹעַ . It is preferable that a man should listen to the rebuke of a wise man; he shall therefore become wiser than a man listening to the song of fools, for the latter shall not understand or hear anything there, except a message of folly.

6. כִּי כְקוֹל . Just like the sound of flames spreading, which is heard when thorns are kindled beneath a bronze pot with a view to cooking a dish in it - but there is no real heat from those thorns, that is, heat such as one would expect from other wood - so is the laughter of the fool with his many words, for with his voice he proclaims things which are devoid of all discernment and fragrance, though they (purport) to be admonition and wisdom.

 וְגַם זֶה הֶבֶל . "This too is empty" as the examples of emptiness mentioned above. Therefore a man must keep away from fools and the jesting of their words.

7. כי הערשק יהולל חכם . This refers back to
 ולב כסילים נבית שמחה (v.4). It is as if to say,
 fools are drawn and are eager to enter the house of
 feasting, which activity brings them to a state of sin and
 iniquity. Therefore wise men must keep away from fools,
 because the fool who is full of folly and oppression makes
 a wise man mad, that is, makes him a fool and destroys the
 mind of wisdom which is a gift (מתנה) to a man from
 God (הק'). The wisdom of a wise man is turned into
 folly. הערשק . The fool is called ערשק because
 he is in fact full of folly and oppression; another
 example of this is found in the phrase וחטאת עמך
 (Exod. 5.16) where the people are called⁵⁵ a fault.

 מתנה . Wisdom is called a gift (מתנה) in line
 with the meaning of the verse which says כי יתן חכמה
 (Prov. 2.6)

8. טוב אחריית דבר מראשיתו . "The end of anything is better
 than its beginning".

 מראשיתו של דבר = מראשית . For at the
 beginning of anything its secret is not known, nor is it
 revealed until the end, and so he who hears must listen and
 pay attention, for he should not open his mouth until he
 hears.

 טוב ארך רוח . For the longsuffering person, and he

who controls his indignation, is better than he who is arrogant and quick-tempered. With regard to the man who is patient⁵⁶ we are able⁵⁷ to use the term ארך רוח ; the idea of 'length' is included in that he prolongs (מאריך) his anger and is not anxious, but bears his indignation and is quiet; and, since this expression is suitable with respect to the man who is not bad-tempered, it is fitting to call him who is quick-tempered גבה רוח .

9. אל תבהל ברוחך לכעוס . Subdue your evil nature lest you become angry, because anger is in the possession of fools; they are bad-tempered.

10. אל תאמר מה היה . Do not say, What are the things which are done in the world now, lest you be surprised and question about them, stating that the former times were good and more distinguished with respect to what was done than the present time; because it is not because of wisdom in you that you asked about this matter, but rather through your great folly, because you yourself ought to understand from your own observation that humanity mourns and passes away daily.

11. טובה חכמה עם נחלה . The wisdom of a man is important, and good with an inheritance and property left him by his father; but these goods will not last unless he has sufficient wisdom to look after them.

ויותר לרואי השמש . Wisdom is better than money to those who see the sun⁵⁸, that is those who walk and conduct themselves in the world, for their wisdom supports and serves them.

12. כי בצל החכמה בצל הכסף . The meaning of "wisdom is good along with an inheritance" is repeated in that where we find חכמה we find 'money' כסף and the rest of riches along with it.

ויותר דעת . This repeats "and an advantage to those who see the sun"; the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to those who possess it. For by means of his wisdom (a man) conducts himself and supports himself in the world, and it (wisdom) protects him from evil deeds.

13. ראה את מעשה האלקים . "Consider the work of God (האלקים)". i.e. Allow your mind to perceive and understand the works of God (הק'), so that fear of him shall be upon your face, and you may not sin; thus he will protect you from all evil. For who is he who has at his disposal the power to straighten that which God (הק') has made crooked. Therefore men should fear before him for no one can rescue from his hand.

14. ביום טובה היה בטוב . At the time of prosperity, when God (הק') sends you his prosperous blessing, you will receive it with joy and gladness.

וביום רעה ראה . And when God (ה'ק') sends you an evil time, bringing divine punishment upon you, consider and bear your punishment. Be silent before him and reform⁵⁹ your ways for him, and you shall have pardon.

גם את זה לעמת זה . Again, the prosperity which God (ה'ק') has given you is the payment of a reward for the good deed (המצוה) which you had performed; and the misfortune which he sent you in your time of evil, is the payment of a reward corresponding to a misdeed which you had committed. God (ה'ק') does all these things that man may not find out anything in connection⁶⁰ with God (ה'ק') except righteousness and justice; he grants him prosperity for observing the validity of his commands, and misfortune because of sins which he has committed.

15. את הכל ראיתי בימי הנלי . How many things have I given consideration to, during my empty time, in the affairs of the world! For you have a righteous (man) in the world who is more righteous than enough, and he perishes in his abundant righteousness; for example a righteous man who is killed because of a small commandment, in that he did not wish to help himself and remain alive and not die. And you have a wicked (man) in the world who transgresses a small commandment because he is not killed; and helps himself and remains alive and does not die, but prolongs

life in his evil, because of a small transgression which he commits.

ניש רשע , i.e. a wicked man, who is not in reality wicked but righteous, though on account of a small transgression which he commits he is called "wicked".

16. אל תהי צדיק הרבה . Concerning these works which I have seen, I warn you not to be over-righteous, nor wiser than you need.

למה תשומם . "Why should you be destroyed" from the world, for you will be killed because of a small matter. And do not be over-wicked and so become foolish, that is, a fool, experienced in acting wickedly. And why should you die before your time, if you act so wickedly? It is better for you to seize righteousness, that is, be a righteous man, and at the same time not to withdraw from wickedness, that is, do not lose hold of it; for the man who fears God (שמים) does his duty in both. He guards himself from being over-righteous or more wicked than necessary, for all his deeds are for the sake of God (שמים)

is of the same type as תכונן in the text
(Num. 21.27) תבנה ותכונן עיר סיחון

19. החכמה תעוז לחכם . Wisdom is a strong tower to a wise man, by which to guard his city, according to the meaning of the text which says ומצא בה אים מסכן וחכם

There was found in
 it a poor wise man who delivers the city by his wisdom .."
 (Koh. 9.15); that is, better than ten rulers which were
 in the city to guard it.

החכמה The scripture is not written תעוז להכם
 , תעוז להכם rather it expresses strength, viz. תחכם להכם
 because it goes on to say "than ten rulers" implying that
 they would give strength and power to a city.

These ten are not meant to be an
 exact number meaning neither more nor less; it is rather
 like i.e. "than many rulers" as in the
 text (Lev. 26.26) ואפר עשר נשים לחמכם where the word is
 not written as an exact number.

20. כי אדם אין צדיק בארץ , And now, having said to you
 that there is nothing in the world as important as wisdom
 your mind must therefore grasp this, that there is no wise
 man on the earth who does good throughout his life and does
 not sin. Therefore you must watch yourself very carefully
 lest you come under the power of sin - arguing, with
 respect to the wise man, from minor to major (קל וחומר).

i.e. the אין חכם , it is the same as אין צדיק
 wise man is referred to as righteous as in the text above

(7.16) אל תהי צדיק הרבה ואל תחכם

21. גם לכל הרורים . With this instruction also he cautions you: On top of the instructions with which I have warned you - with respect to all the evil things which men say to you - respond in no way to them!

אשר לא תשמע , lest you show that you have heard your servant who is cursing you; but act like a deaf man as if you had not heard, for you yourself know that you have often cursed others and you would not wish them to hear any of your cursing; likewise you should behave like a deaf man when your servant curses you.

מקללך , is not an expression of malediction but rather of disrespect, for the meanings 'malediction' and 'blessing' are not suitable in the case of a servant, but rather the ideas of respect and disregard, as we have in scripture בן יכבד אב ועבד אדוניו "a son respects his father and a servant his master" (Mal. 1.6),

ואקל בעיני' "and she despised me .." (Gen. 16.5),

ובקלותי עוד "and I will make myself even more contemptible (2 Sam. 6.22)

23. כל זר בסיתי בחכמה⁶¹, i.e. every circumstance of this matter I have tested in my great wisdom. I thought that I should become wise with the deep wisdom; but this deep wisdom was far from me in that I was unable to understand it or grasp it.

24. רחוק מה שהי' . What has been profound wisdom, as for example the Work of the Chariot and the Book of Creation⁶², is far from me in that I cannot grasp it; "deep deep" (describes) a product of this extra wisdom⁶³; and who is that man who, by his great wisdom, can find it out?
25. סגורתי , אה טורנאי in French (=so tournai). I turned myself; also my mind and my knowledge I turned to understand the affairs of the world "to know and to search out"; my mind sought to explore wisdom and the sum of things in the world, and to know the wickedness of folly and the foolishness of madness - that evil which is more wicked and evil than all the evils in the world.
26. ומרצא אני . And I have found one thing in the world which is worse than death, that is an evil woman whose heart is a trap and net with which to trap men and make them fall into her snares, her traps and her nets.
- אסוריים ידיה . "Her hands are fetters", the hands of a prison with which to bind men. Whoever pleases God (הק') shall escape from her, that is, he shall not fall into her hands; but whoever is a sinner shall be taken by her.
- ווקש חכמה . Since he has said above ומרצא אני .. and to seek wisdom .." (7.25) it is fitting to follow

it with an expression of "finding", because in an expression which refers to "seeking" there is also an allusion to "discovery".

• . מצודים וחרמים . means nets (מכמרות) and snares (רשתות).

 ימלט ממנה . It is fitting to continue the idea of capture and escape because he has likened her to traps and snares, just as (we have in) וציבור משחית אנשים ילכדו (Jer. 5.26), where משחית must have the meaning net, as (also in) המציב והמשחית (1 Sam. 14.15), "our soul has escaped like a bird from the snare of the trappers, the snare is broken and we have escaped" (Ps. 124.7)

27- ראה זה מצאתי⁶⁴ . So said⁶⁴ the will (נפש) of
28. Kohleth rather than he himself who demonstrates it: See this matter I have found in the world, regarding the relation of these matters to each other. While I was investigating them one after another to search and find out⁶⁵ the sum, meaning the wisdom of the world ...

 אשר עור "for my will (נפש) had long sought out practical wisdom "and I had not found it"; behold I have found a single man, out of a thousand men, who is blameless in his deeds, but I have not found a woman who is perfect and blameless in her actions.

 בכל אלה , i.e. a thousand women.

- אמרה קהלת is peculiar: Why is it not written
 אמרה בפש קהלת ? It is to be resolved (by)
 as (for example the text) ותכל דוד לצאת (2 Sam.
 13.39)⁶⁶ which may be resolved by ותכל בפש דוד לצאת
 29. לבד ראה זה מצאתי . This thing only have I found;
 see and consider it, that God (הק') has made and
 created man upright and becoming, in that he created him
 in his likeness and in his own image; "but they" i.e. men
 have sought out devices, evil machinations, in order to
 turn away from the commandments of God (הק'), and it is
 a great evil by man.
 מחשבות , means intentions (מחשבות)

Chapter VIII

1. מי כהחכם . Which man is esteemed in the world like
 the wise man; and who knows the interpretation of a matter
 as he does? For there is nothing as important in the
 world as wisdom in that the wisdom of a man makes his face
 shine, and makes him glad; and the insolent appearance of
 his face is changed into a shining face, due to the great
 gladness of his wisdom.
2. אני פי מלך שמור . I am continually engaged in
 observing the commands of a king - that is, God (הקב"ה)

- keeping his commandments.

ועל דברת שבועת אלקים . And any matter about which I swear by the name of God (ה'ק') saying "Thus I shall do by the oath of his name", I both observe and fulfill.

3. אל תבהל מפניו תלך . Do not hurry from the presence of God (ה'ק') in order to get away from him, but walk before him (and) keep his commandments.

ואל תעמוד . And then, do not persist in an evil affair, when you keep his commandments; for God (ה'ק') does all that pleases him and he shall render every good thing to you if you walk in his ways by doing his commandments.

4. באשר דבר מלך שלטון , i.e. in the place where the word of God (ה'ק') is - since he is king there, he rules, and demonstrates his power to do what, in his opinion, is good.

ומי יאמר לו מה תעשה , And therefore men must keep his commandments.

שלטון , is a substantive.

5. שומר מצוה . Whoever keeps his commandments shall neither experience nor cause anything evil.

ועת ומשפט . the mind of the wise man knows the punishment time⁶⁷ of the judgement, which always comes, therefore they (wise men) keep his commandments.

6. כי לכל חפץ . with regard to every business of
God ('הק') there is a time to give a verdict and a
judgement, "for the evil of man is great" against himself;
and God ('הק') shall grant him his reward; since he
does not know what verdict he shall have in the end, who
shall tell him of his punishment; for he shall (only)
find it out in the latter time.

ועת לכל . This is like the text כי לכל חפץ יש עת

חפץ תחת השמים (Koh. 3.1)

8. אין אדם שליט ברוח . No man controls his own breath
on the day of his death, retaining it to hand it over to
the angel of death, because he has no control or power
in the day of his death.

ואין משלחת . There is no power at his disposal to
send a contingent of his valiant men to do battle with the
angel of death lest he take his breath from him; for the
wickedness which he has done will not save him who is a
master of wickedness.

, i.e. to retain (למנוע) as we have in לכלוא

לא תכלא רחמין (Exod. 36.6) and ויכלא העם מהגיא
(Ps. 40.12)

9. את כל זה . All this work "I have seen" and have paid
attention to all actions; that time when man deliberately
performs evil deeds shall be his time of punishment, when

his evil deeds will be misfortune for him, the payment of the deserts for his deeds.

וְנִתַּן , is the infinitive absolute.⁶⁸

10- וְנִתַּן רְאִיתִי רָשָׁעִים . This is a reference to the text
11. above, "All this I tested in wisdom" (7.23) and "I turned my mind to know and to search out .." (7.25) Thus its interpretation is according to its plain sense and then, for I had been thinking with insight, I saw in the world wicked men, deserving of death and burial, who were coming and going from the holy place and ruins, and they were doing many evil things in it, but the end for them is that their fame and remembrance is forgotten in that city in which they so acted.

גַּם זֶה הַבַּל . "This too is empty", i.e. with the rest of the empty things. For nothing is done, nor is the deserts for their evil paid out to them speedily; therefore, because God (הָקֵי) is longsuffering toward them "the mind of men" is full of evil-doing, and they say, what loss do we experience by doing evil? There is no judgment and no judge. For a sinner may do evil for a long time up to a hundred years, and God (הָקֵי) is longsuffering with him; for I also know that it will be well with those who fear God (שָׁמִים), those who fear him (הִירִיאים מִמֶּנּוּ); but it shall not be well with

the wicked, nor will he live long; like a passing shadow shall he pass away from the world because he did not fear God (שמים)

וּבֹכֶן , is like וּבֹכֶן = and thereby .

While still alive wicked men are called buried (men) because they deserve death, as it is said (Ezek. 21.30)⁶⁹ וְאַתָּה חָלַל רָשָׁע בְּשֵׂיאוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל

וְנָאֵר , is a repetition of the phrase יִהְיֶה

וְיִשְׁתַּכַּח , means "forgetting". It is impossible to explain it as having the meaning 'find', the meaning 'find' does not occur in this form in Hebrew; it is Aramaic (לשון תרגום)

גַּם זֶה הַבֵּל , that which is hidden from men who are not able to grasp the explanation and who do not know why God (הַק') is longsuffering with them, such things are called 'empty' because men are amazed and shocked by the matter.

11. דָּבָר = פֶּתֶגֶם

12. מֵאָה . The text is abbreviated; it is in construct with the missing word, either יָמִים (days) or שָׁנִים (years); but he does not use the word for its exact meaning, but rather to express a long time - And so (the phrase) וְשָׁכֹרֶת וְלֹא מֵיִן (Is. 51.21) "drunk but not with wine" where שָׁכֹרֶת is in construct with a word

which is missing, i.e. drunk with another thing but not with wine.

14. יש הגל אשר געסה על הארץ . There is a matter about which men are amazed and shocked, and it is in force in the world - There are righteous men in the world who get what should befall wicked men in that it does not go well with them; and there are wicked men in the world who get what is due to the righteous in that it does not go badly with them, but exceedingly well.

אמרתי שגם זה הגל . I was amazed and shocked at this.

15. ושבחתי אני את השמחה . And I praise rejoicing, for there is nothing good for a man in the world except eating and drinking and rejoicing, to rejoice in his lot; and this thing shall be linked with him "in his toil" throughout his life which God (ה') has given him in the world.

י'לונר , expresses connection as in the text

(Gen. 29.34) "my husband shall be united to me".

16. כאשר בתתי . When I applied my mind to know about wisdom and to observe the business of the world I saw emptiness in it; for even in the day and in the night he does not experience sleep in his eyes. The whole of this verse continues to speak about the mind as if it were a man with eyes; this is what is said in this verse, viz.

ולראות , i.e. the mind observes the business. Hence we find "the sight of the mind" in another place, in the text (Koh. 1.16).
 ילבי ראה הרבה חכמה ודעת

° שינה בעיניו איננו רואה , for his mind does not rest and does not sleep. We find the idea of sleep in connection with the mind in the text גם בלילה לא שכב לבו (Koh. 2.23) and again אני ישינה ולבי ער (Song of Songs 5.2)

17. I have seen the works of God (הק'), that a man cannot understand the explanation nor find out the works of the world; he does not know the nature of God (הק') who stretches out creation.

בשל אשר יעמל , that matter which man toils to seek out and learn shall not be discovered by men, nor shall they know the nature or the works of God (הק'); and even if the wise man thinks he knows his works, he is unable to find out, or learn to grasp his knowledge.

Chapter IX

1. כי את כל זה . For I applied my mind to all this business.

ולבון , "and to examine" all this work that the righteous, the wise and their deeds are all under the rule

and in the power of God (*הק'*), but they know neither the love nor the hatred of God (*הק'*), since they are unable to test what is loved by God (*הק'*) and what is hated.

ולקום is from *קום*, derived from *קם*, just as *ולשור* is from *שור* and *ולשורב* from *שורב*.

אשטיןא = *en la estena* (?) in French⁷⁰, we find a similar sense for *יד* in *מחנה יד מצרים* (Exod. 18.10), *מיד מצרים* (Exod. 3.8 etc.) and *מיד פרעה* (Deut. 7.8)

Two occurrences of *גם* usually follow each other without grammatical exactness as, for example, *גם בחרור גם בתולה* (Deut. 32.25) and

גם לי גם לך (I Kings, 3.26)

All the usual evils are fixed to come upon them, and the same fate befalls all of them.

2. *הכל כאשר לכל*. This is the comment upon *הכל*

לפניהם. All evils and troubles come alike upon all men. And the same fate befalls them all, that is the righteous and the wicked and the good, the clean and the unclean and he who sacrifices, each one the same: the good man and the sinner alike; and so he who swears falsely is like the man who is afraid to swear - all are the same.

3. מקרה אחד . "One fate" befalls them all; and this is an evil business which is in the world - that all have the same fate. And also the mind of men is full of evil and the ability to do great evil while they live, for they say to themselves: What punishment have those who do evil? For each one has the same fate and latter end, and afterwards⁷¹ (they go) to the dead, in that death is in force in them all. Therefore wicked men maintain their wickedness, in that they do not repent from their evil way; and after death they are unable to repent. Because of this I wonder why, with regard to them, strict justice is so much prolonged, and why they all have the same fate.
4. כי מי אשר יחיה . For the man who is alive and counted among the living "has hope" of repentance; while he is alive he is able to repent but after his death he cannot repent for "a living dog is better than a dead lion"; after his death he will have no ability or strength.
5. כי החיים יודעים שימותו . "For the living know that they will die"; therefore they should repent while they are yet alive; "but the dead know nothing"; they are unable to feel remorse and repent, and they shall have no gain of reward for the malice of their works, for their memory is forgotten.

6. גם אהבתם . "Their love" - in that they loved humanity -
 "and their hatred" - in that they hated like
 men - וגם קנאתם "and their envy" - in that they envied
 others, have already perished for they are dead and their
 memory is forgotten; they have no longer any share in all
 that is done in the world.

7.. "Go ahead and eat
 10. לך אכול בשמחה לחמך ושתה בלב טוב
 your food with enjoyment and drink with a merry heart .."
 for God (הקב"ה) is already pleased with the excellence
 of what you do. "Let your clothes always be white" and
 clean that you may behave with purity and innocence. And
 be zealous in anointing your head for your own enjoyment,
 for the ancients were accustomed to anoint with oil.
 "And approve of life" by rejoicing in your lot with your
 wife whom you love throughout the life which God (הק')
 has allotted to you in the world; for this word - by
 which I forewarn you for your enjoyment - shall be your
 portion in exchange for the toil in which you engage in
 the world. "And all that your hand finds" to do - good
 and good works - that do⁷² while you are yet alive; for
 you will have no more opportunity for action, devices,
 knowledge or wisdom in the grave (קבר) to which you are
 going.

 כל ימי חיי הבלך . occasionally he repeats himself.

בכוחך , i.e. while you are yet alive: this refers by way of distinction to נשאול which appears later in the verse.

11. שבתי וראה , I saw again another thing in the world that "the race does not belong to the swift"; it is not worth their while running assiduously, for although they move swiftly while they are running, time, chance and fate overtake them, as with other men.

"nor does the battle belong to the strong" in that triumph in battle does not regularly help them, for they have the same fate. And again "bread does not belong to the wise" all the time on account of their wisdom, "nor riches to the intelligent" all the time by reason of their great understanding; sometimes they become poor. And again "success does not belong to the skilful" all the time; sometimes they are not successful and are hated by humanity, for one fate befalls them all.

12. כי גם לא ידע האדם . For man does not know nor does he recognise his hour, his appointed time when he shall fall "like fish which are caught" and fall "into a treacherous net and like birds" which fall "and are caught in a snare". For just as they fall and are caught, so men are ensnared and stumble at their evil time, when their misfortune falls suddenly upon them.

יִקְשִׁים , is like יִקְשִׁים in Jeremiah (5.26)
 meaning⁷³ 'captured'.

13. גַּם זֶה רָאִיתִי . This example of wisdom I have also
 seen in the world, and it was a great wonder⁷⁴ to me.

14- עֵיר קַטְנוֹה וְאִנְשֵׁים בָּהּ מְעַט . It is not necessary to
 15. say that if it had been a weak city with many men in it
 to guard it, or a strong city, with few men in it to guard
 it, and an enemy came against it with siege - a king who
 was not so important and with no great army - it would
 not have seemed so surprising to me if a poor and wise
 man had rescued it by his great wisdom; but it was both
 a weak city with few men in it to guard it, and a great
 and important king (who) came against it with a large army,
 and surrounded it with a siege, in order to build against
 it great strong fortifications: and there was found in it
 the remedy, viz. a man who was weak and poor and wise and
 by means of his great wisdom he rescued the city from the
 great king, his many soldiers and his great fortifications.
 Therefore I wonder and am amazed that in the end no one
 remembered the weak man who, by his wisdom, had rescued
 the city.

16. וְאָמַרְתִּי אֲנִי . "And I say" the wisdom of this man is
 far better than might, as is the latter end of him whose
 wisdom was despised and whose words were not heeded.

17. דַּבְּרֵי חֲכָמִים . The words of this poor wise man are listened to in peace, that is, his wisdom is far better than the shout of a ruling king who governs and lords it over his heroes who are fools. Because they have no wisdom with which to scheme against this man who is poor and wise, they are called fools. (גּוֹי כְּסִילִים)
18. טוֹבָה חֲכָמָה . The wisdom of this poor and wise man is better than the weapons of war belonging to those enemies of the city.

וְחֹמַת אֶחָד . Just as this wise poor man delivered the city by his wisdom, so one sinner destroys much good and is like and is compared with flies which are fit for nothing except death, since they cause scented oil to stink and ferment.

Chapter X

1. יָבִיעַ , Its interpretation is according to its context which is that of contaminating and spoiling oil.

יָקָר , has the idea of seriousness. There is in fools both malice and gravity and a little more folly than wisdom and honour, for the sinner destroys much good by his stupidity and folly.

2. לב חכם לימינו . The reasoning of the mind of the wise man is to go on the right way, and the reasoning of the fool is to walk on the left way; just as the right hand is more important than the left hand; so he compares and calls the way of goodness 'the right way' and the way of evil 'the left way'; and because a wise mind has written לימינו לשמאלו "to his right, to his left" and has not written מימינו משמאלו "from his right, from his left" it is necessary to interpret in this sense.
3. וגם בדרכו . And even when the fool is on the road his mind is deficient, he stares, and acts idiotically.
- ואמר לכל . Because of his disgrace and folly in which he engages, it is like saying to everyone that he is foolish and a fool, for men recognise the folly of his actions; thus the scripture continually praises the thinking of the wise man and speaks slightly of the fool.
4. אם רוח המושל , i.e. the temper of a ruler, the governor who rules over you - if he should bring false charges against you do not leave your place; do not flee from there for fear of him, because your soothing tongue, with which you shall appease him by your conciliatory words which you will use to entreat him, shall cause him to remit great sins which you have committed against him,

and he shall no more bring false accusations against you.

מִרְפָּא , an example of its meaning is found in

וְלִשׁוֹן חֲכָמִים מִרְפָּא (Prov. 12.18) "But the tongue of the wise heals".

- 5- יֵשׁ רָעָה רְאִיתִי . I have seen an evil in the world,
6. which is as an error proceeding from the mouth of the ruler who says to his servants, Do so and so - whether to hang someone or to do some other evil - and they go and hang him who neither sinned nor rebelled; for they go astray with the command of the ruler. For the fool referred to here as (הַסָּכֵל בַּמְרוֹמִים וְרִיב "folly in many high places") is appointed to be rich, a great and important prince, while the rich sit in difficult conditions, for they are weak and humble.

7. רְאִיתִי עֲבוּדִים . It is an interpretation of
בִּיתָן הַסָּכֵל וְגוֹ' (v.6); servants conduct themselves like masters and leaders, becoming horse-riders; but princes proceed like servants, not riding horses; that is the superior below and the inferior on high.

- 8- חוֹפֵר גּוֹמֵץ . He proceeds to advise man that if he
9. possesses other skills he should not engage in the following ones, because he himself has sometimes come to grief through them: he should not be a digger of pits, because there are times when he himself might fall and die, like

the meaning advanced by our great ones גיראה בגיריה מקטיל

מדויל יד' משתלים סדנא בסדנא יתיב מדויל יד' משתלים

(B. Tal. Pesahim 28a) "When the arrow-maker is killed by his own arrow, he is paid by his own doing; when the stock-maker sits in his own stock he is paid by his own doing; nor should he be a breaker of fences, lest serpents, which are to be found in the cracks of the wall, bite him. He should neither move nor remove large stones because he might be hurt⁷⁶ with the effort; nor should he be a hewer of trees because of the hardship, for it is great and he over-heats himself with that work. And so the evil-doer shall eat the fruit of his deeds, for he who sows toil shall reap trouble.

גומץ , means 'hole' and 'pit'

ויסיעו אבנים גורלות , similar to the text

(1 K. 5.31)

ותהי למלך , alludes to 'heat' like the text

סוכנת (1 K. 1.4) "and she became nurse⁷⁷ to the king".

10. אם קחה הברזל . If swords of iron are blunt and their edge and whetting spoiled and impaired⁷⁸, and the man does not sharpen or whet their blades (which were not sharpened or whetted), yet he who wields the sword with a superior mind and strength shall be strengthened to increase power and success in battle; thus it is praise for weapons of

war although they are not sharpened. And there is an advantage over all this - appropriately he praises wisdom more than these. This text is a repetition of what is said above טוֹבָה חִכְמָה מִכֵּלֵי קֶרֶב "wisdom is better than weapons of war" (Koh. 9.18)

הַבְּרָזֶל , means implements of war, as the text

וְנָשַׁל הַבְּרָזֶל (Deut. 19.5) "and the axe-head fell .."⁷⁹

קִלְקֵל , has the idea of polish and glitter, as we have in בְּחֶשֶׁת קֶלֶל (Dan. 10.6; Ezek. 1.7) "sparkling bronze"

11. אִם יִשָּׁךְ הַנָּחָשׁ . If the serpent bites the man, it is because the charmer did not mutter a charm over it that it bites; and there is no advantage in a person who is eloquent, who knows how to charm, but who does not do so. Thus he warns that one must mutter a charm so that the serpent may not bite.

הַנָּחָשׁ , the expression is appropriate with בְּחֶשֶׁת , as in the text וְנִשְׁכְּרוּ וְגוֹלֵם לֹא לָהֶם (Jer. 8.17) "poisonous snakes which have no charm and they bite ..."

12. דְּבַרֵּי פִי חָכָם . The words of a wise man who speaks with quietness and persuasion, reasonably and properly - he is granted and awarded favours in the eyes of humanity.

וְשִׁפְחוֹת כִּסִּיל , i.e. every utterance of the fool;

because he speaks haughtily his pride shall consume him from the world, in that he is despised and rejected in the eyes of humanity.

13. תַּחֲלַת דְּבָרֵי פִיָּהוּ . This is the general rule - the beginning of a fool's speech is folly and stupidity, and the end of it is wicked madness.

14. הַכִּסִּיל יִרְבֶּה דְּבָרִים . The fool multiplies stupid words but he neither knows of nor understands the evil that shall come and overtake him at his end; nor does he know of the evil which shall come upon him suddenly from behind while he goes his way, for who could tell him; therefore one must avoid fools.

15. עֵמֶל הַכִּסִּילִים תִּיגַעֲנוּ . The toil of every fool wearies him, for, due to his stupidity he becomes so tired and weary while he is outside the city that he does not know how to return to the city.

תִּיגַעֲנוּ . עֵמֶל is read as feminine gender; therefore there is a prefixed ת.⁸⁰

16. אֵי לֶךְ אֶרֶץ . Woe (אֵי) to you O land, whose king is a boy and a fool, and destroys the world in his stupidity and youth.

וְשָׂרִיךְ . "And your princes", who are dependent upon and who follow the king, feast excessively in the morning,

destroying the land in that they do nothing; therefore one should avoid a boy-king.⁸¹

17. אשריך ארץ . Happy are you, O land, "whose king is a son of nobles", important and wise because he established the world in his wisdom, whose princes, who follow the king, eat at a normal eating time with great vigour; for they fight with the enemies in order to establish the land, and at eating time they go to their homes and eat.

 ולא בשתי , they do not engage in intoxication of wine and gluttony; therefore you should stick to a king who is a son of nobles in order that the world might be established.

 בשתי . I have not heard any reason why בשתי should not be vocalised as from שתי , as קרי is from קרה .

18. בעצלותים . Due to the laziness of the owner of the house the roof sinks and falls in, because he does not want to repair it. The walls of the house are called roof (כקרה) because they are the strength of the roof of the house.

 ובשפלות ידיים . In the sloth of idleness a leakage of rain drips from the house.

 ידלף טורד ביום סגריר , as in the text
(Prov. 27.15) "a continual dripping on a very rainy day".

 ימר , like ימר (i.e. Niphal)

19. לשחוק עושים לחם . Those who engage in laughter have food, and the living are made glad by the drinking of wine, and money (answers) by making possession ; the root idea (of ענה) is 'make, produce', as in the text אשר יענה (1 Kings 18.24)

אח הכל , "all things" for bread and wine are acquired with money. And therefore one must exert oneself in order to have money.

יענה expresses 'doing, producing'.

20. גם במדעך . Even within your mind do not plan⁸² to curse a king;

ובחורי משכרך , in your place of privacy do not revile a rich man.

כי עוף השמים . This statement is not to be taken literally. He is saying this: It is impossible that it should not be revealed and known to everyone, for the end of secrets is that they are to be revealed.

ובעל הכנפים , he repeats the idea of a bird.

Chapter XI

- 1.1. שלח לחמך על פני המים . The man whom you may reckon you would never benefit from - treat him well, for after some time he will also treat you well.

2. תן חלק למכועה . To several men - to seven men or even eight - give portions of what is yours, even while you may be of the opinion that you will not benefit from them, for you do not know what evil deed shall in fact be evil upon the earth; today or to-morrow you may benefit from them or need them.

3. Just as "when the clouds are full of rain" they empty themselves and pour out upon the earth, and just as "when a tree falls to the south" or to the north it shall be on the spot where it falls, so it is impossible that you will not benefit from them, for you shall give them portions of what is yours.

יהוא is for יהא

4. שומר רוח . Whoever watches and expects that the wind shall come up - because sowing is good when the wind is blowing - he shall not sow much, for the wind only happens to blow occasionally; and whoever observes and pays attention to the clouds at harvest time shall not reap. It is not possible for him not to see clouds every morning, he should not fear the rain and the shower but reap what he is able to reap and not tarry because of clouds, which he sees in the morning of a certain day. If he refrains today from reaping for fear of rain perhaps the rains will not descend today but tomorrow; and so day by day it is

found that he is idle and standing still.

5. כאשר אינך יודע . For since you do not know of bones which are in the belly of someone who is pregnant so you do not know the things which God (ה') does; for you are unable to discern when the rains will descend, and you should not watch for the wind or observe the clouds but you should

6. בבקר זרע את זרעך ולערב אל תנוח . "In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening do not withdraw" from your task nor waver from it, but do all that you are able to be busy with and to work at in your occupation; for you do not know whether this time or that time is a good time to sow or whether both alike are good; therefore you should not be idle.

ועוצה , the sense is found in the text כעצמים

עיוני "and he closes his eyes" (Isaiah 33.15) referring to the thoughts of a man.

- 7- ומתוך האור . Eyesight is good for the seeing of the
8. light of the sun which is in the world; for if a man lives many years he should rejoice in all of them, provided he is righteous, and let him remember the days of the darkness of death in this world in order that he might not be a sinner in this world, for the days of darkness and death shall be many. If he has sinned while he lived, all the

years which he lived will, at death, be to him emptiness and evil.

9. שמת בחור בילדותך . You should rejoice during your youth and be cheerful in your rejoicing during your manhood, walking according to the ways of your heart and according to what your eyes behold, and you should know that in the end God (ה') shall bring you to judgement about these things.

בחורותיך . אונטליין jonetemps (?) in French.⁸³

10. והסר כעס מלבך . "Remove anger from your mind" for you should not be irritable or do evil, because "the inclination of man's mind is evil from his youth". (Gen. 8.21)

והשחרות , this repeats the idea of הילדות ; the time of youth is so called because of its hair which is black.

Chapter XII

1. וזכור . You should be careful to be mindful of the creator in order to refrain from sin during your youth, and to repent.

עד אשר לא יבוא . Before "the time of trouble" comes - the time of old age, when you will say of your former activities "I have no pleasure in them". Since you do not know when you will die during the great weakness of your old age, you should be quick to repent before this.

2. עד אשר לא תחשך השמש , before the world becomes dark and obscure for you, in that the luminaries will not shine for you; because you are near the time of your death you should repent.

ושבר העבים , before darkness after darkness happens to you you should quickly return to God (הק'). This text is of a type with the clause אלביש שמים קדרות (Is. 50.3) "I clothe the heavens with blackness", and is an example of the world being dark for those in great distress.

ושבר , means return. This is to say - when rain began there were clouds in the world; after this the rains descended, then the world shone and now the clouds have returned. This is darkness after darkness.

3. It is "when the keepers of the house" tremble and quake. These are the ribs which protect the inside of the body; this too refers to the end of his old age when he will be extremely weak.

והתעוות , "And they are bent .." for "the man of valour" shall be distorted and trembling. These are the legs upon which the body is supported.

ובטלו המחנות⁸⁴ "And the grinding maids stop", i.e. the teeth are idle because they have diminished in strength.

וחשכו הרואות . that is the eyes have become darkened in their place.

4. וסוגרו דלתים בשוק , i.e. his external orifices are closed up. בשוק , orifices which are external, i.e. which are turned outward, which see the outside.

בשפל קול המחנה . When the noise of millstones is lower - those which grind the food of the belly; this refers to the stomach.

ויקום לקול הצפור , "and one rises up at the noise of a bird" in that one is afraid and excited⁸⁵ because of their noise.

וישחר , the noise of male and female singers seems low to him, which is the sense of the verse where it is said by Bazillai the Gileadite when he was very old - '... can I still hear the noise of male and female singers?' (2 Sam. 19.36)

5. גם מגבורה . Again, another thing of which he is afraid and in dread is that which is a little high; and he shall

be terrified of it and be afraid in the street.

וינאץ השקד , Because of his thinness his hip-bone⁸⁶ sticks out: חנק"א in French i.e. 'Hanche'.

ויסתבל החגב , for his buttocks (עגב) shall be a load and a burden to him.

וחפר האביונה . His desire shall be idle; for he is going to his eternal home and the mourners go about bewailing him. Before all these things weary him in his old age he should repent. שיזוער , has a similar meaning to זע in the text ולא קם ולא זע (Est. 5.9)

, i.e. in their places. בארבות

ואל תירא ואל תחת , of the same type as ייראו וחתחתים (Deut. 1.21 etc.) The ideas of 'fear' and 'dismay' support each other.

ירקרק (Lev. 13.49), a 'doubled' word like והחתחתים , and פתלחל (Deut. 32.5) אדמדם (Lev. 13.42,49)

וינאץ . The 'Aleph is not pronounced; it has the meaning of the verb in הנצור הרימונים (Songs. 7.13) "the pomegranates are in bloom".

האביונה , has the idea of 'desire' which means צביון is from אבה , just as אביון derives from אבה , though it happens to be feminine gender. צבה

6. עד אשר לא ירתק , before the spine of a man is entirely severed (ינתק), his head pushed in and his body crushed

in the grave.

7. וישוב , he who is compared to dust on the earth shall .
 again become dust, while the spirit returns to God ('הק')
 ° who placed it within him. Before all these things he
 should repent.

 וירחיקת כסף , the root is also found in
 (Is. 40.19)

 חבל הכסף , this is the backbone.

 גולת הזהב , this means the head on which is placed
 crown and diadem.

 והשבר כר על המבוע , this is virtually a repetition
 of the statement about the silver cord; for when the cord
 snaps, the pitcher at the fountain breaks because it is
 tied and hung up by it; it means the skeleton which, by
 means of the cord, falls and is broken and crushed.

8. הבל הבלים . Now the book is completed; those who
 edited it speak from now on, saying: All the things of
 the world which are practised in it are utterly futile,
 said Koheleth.

 הקהלת , i.e. the wise man.

9. And furthermore, because he was wise in connection with
 these maxims he further taught that wisdom orally.

 דעת . "knowledge" so that the people might know and
 be wise.

ראזן וחקר . He used his ears (אזן) and mind to search out universal concerns and maxims; and he prepared the book of Proverbs.

10. בקש קהלת למצוא , "Koheleth sought to discover" valuable sayings and expressions, and to write books, writing things of integrity and truth.

11. דברי חכמים , And thus it was customary for Solomon the king to say that wise men are like the goad which teaches the beast to walk in the right manner; and so he who listens to wise sayings shall not corrupt, distort or spoil his ways.

וכמשמרות נטועים , this virtually doubles the phrase כמשמרות , in that they are driven firmly and inserted in the cross-beams of the cattle, because they are goads; thus they are the wise men, leaders of assemblies who guide men by instructing them in an upright course. And all their maxims were given by one shepherd; for all of them were said by Moses who heard them and received them by the divine word.

12. ויותר מהמה , my son, be warned of more than what the wise men warn you about, for there is no end of making many books in which to write all the maxims, nor is there the ability to do so! ולקח הרבה , repeats the expression. Many words of wisdom are a weariness of

flesh, because no man can write all the books of wisdom.

13. The end of the word of wisdom "All has been heard"; in general this is the message: "fear God (האליקים) by keeping his commandments, for all your actions should be with reference to God (שמים); for this is the essence of the work of every man.

14. כי את כל מעשה . "Because God (ה') will bring to judgment "every work" which a man does - all his errors and secrets; whether he is an evil man or a good man, he will bring him to judgment.

He returns to and reiterates his general principle.

בעלי אסופות , wise men are called בעלי אסופות - "leaders of gatherings" because men gather to listen to what they say.

הזר , be wary (הרי זהיר)

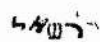
ולהג , its interpretation is in accordance with its context, viz. words, writings, books. All the letters of להג make up the root as is the case with להח , להב , להש and לעג .

Behold the book of Koheleth is completed.

NOTES

Notes on the Introduction

1. e.g. 2.15; 11.9.
2. Quoted by Franz Delitzsch, Commentary on the Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes, Edinburgh, 1877, p.183, cf. also H.W. Hertzberg, "Der Prediger", KAT Band XVII 4-5, 1963, p.222.
3. op. cit. ibid.
4. cf. M. Jastrow, Jr., A Gentle Cynic", Philadelphia, 1919, p.7.
5. op. cit. p.238
6. that is to say, they are canonical scripture.
7. i.e. the Hebrew name (קהלת) of Ecclesiastes. Both names are used throughout the thesis. See the Discussion on Chapter 1 verse 1 for explanation.
8. cf. also .Eduyoth 5.3
9. Yadaim 3.5.
10. B. Tal. Megillah, 7a

11. i.e. no advantage
12. B. Tal. Shabbath, 30b
13. Koheleth Rabbah on 1.3 and 11.9.
14. Jerome, "Commentarius in Ecclesiasten", MPL 23, 1172.
15. cf. Hertzberg's description of the book (see n.2 above);
cf. also R. Gordis, Koheleth, The Man and his World, New
York, 1955, pp. 325ff.
16. The text used throughout is that of Codex Vaticanus
(siglum 'B'), though attention is also paid to the other
Codices.
17. from Origen's Hexaplaric fragments, from the margin of the
Syrohexapla version and from Jerome's commentary.
18. abbreviated  = Rabbi Solomon Yitzhaki
19. cf. notes 2 and 15 above.

Notes on the Septuagint

1. H.E. Swete, Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek,
Cambridge, 1900, p. 9f. Swete points out that the version
is referred to variously as seniorum interpretatio,
septuaginta et duo interpretes, LXX interpretes or
translatores, LXX editio, editio LXX.

2. The text of this 'letter' is reproduced by Swete, op. cit. pp. 519-574; a translation by H. St.J. Thackeray appears in JQR 15, (1903) pp. 337-391. The letter claims that
- seventy-two elders (six from each tribe) were sent to Alexandria by the High Priest in Jerusalem at the request of Philadelphus, in order to translate the Torah for the royal library. This was done in seventy-two days.

From the second century A.D. onwards the 'letter' is referred to by the fathers of the Christian Church and Jewish writers where the story is embellished to some extent. It was believed that the whole of the Old Testament had been translated by the elders and that the result was arrived at by the seventy-two men working separately in cells, and discovering at the end of seventy-two days that each one had produced the exact same translation. (B.J. Roberts, The Old Testament Text and Versions, Cardiff, 1951, pp. 101 f.)

It should be noted that the term 'septuagint', from the Latin septuaginta, means seventy as opposed to seventy-two. How the term 'seventy' arose is uncertain (cf. Roberts op. cit. p.103, n.3; S. Jellicoe, The Septuagint and Modern Study, Oxford, 1968, pp. 56ff.)

3. op. cit. pp.315f.

4. As early as the eighteenth century the similarities with Aquila were observed by B. de Montfaucon, Hexaplorum Origenis quae supersunt, Paris, 1713, ad Eccles. 7.23. Graetz, in the nineteenth century, was the first commentator to attribute the work to Aquila (H. Graetz, Kohélet, Leipzig, 1871, pp. 173-9), while this century has seen a large number of scholars turning to follow Graetz or to a position not far removed from his. The chief and most recent exponent of the Aquilan theory is D. Barthélemy, "Les Devanciers d'Aquila", VTS 10, 1963.

It should be noted that a few of the features deemed Aquilan appear in the LXX of Song of Songs and Ezekiel, but they are scattered and inconsequential.

5. that is, other than the work of Aquila.
 6. F.C. Burkitt, "Aquila" JQR 10, 1898, p.208.
 7. Swete, op. cit. p.323.
 8. T.P. Dale, A Commentary on Ecclesiastes, London, 1873, p.xviii
 9. Burkitt, ibid. p.214.
 10. B. Tal. Menahoth 29b.
 11. The question is also recorded in B. Tal. Hagigah 12a.
- Nahum of Gam Zu is credited in these passages in the Midrash with having taught that every \aleph and η is a limitation while every \aleph and η is an extension.

Rabbi Ishmael himself, while more sober than Akiba in exegesis, did suggest that on occasion נק might have an exegetical rather than a merely grammatical purpose. (See Midrash Rabbah, Yalkut Shemoni and Rashi on Nu. 6.13 where it is said that R. Ishmael expounded נק on three occasions in the Torah - Lev. 22.16; Nu. 6.13 and Deut. 34.6)

12. At Jamnia c.100 A.D. The influence of the school of Akiba in this pronouncement is generally recognised, cf. B. Tal. Yadaim 3.5
13. Swete, op. cit. p.30.
14. Aquila is to be distinguished from another of that name mentioned in the New Testament (Acts 18.2), of Jewish origin. Both are reported to have come from Pontus, but Aquila, the translator, was a Gentile who had been converted to Christianity. He had been excommunicated because he persisted in astrology, and had subsequently become associated with the Jewish Rabbis and their teaching. There is some evidence that Aquila is to be identified with Onkelos who is credited with the Targum which bears his name. (cf. A.E. Silverstone, Aquila and Onkelos, Manchester, 1931).

15. cf. Burkitt, Fragments of the Books of Kings according to the Translation of Aquila, Cambridge, 1897; C. Taylor, Hebrew-Greek Cairo Geniza Palimpsests, Cambridge, 1900.
16. J. Tal. Megillah 71c
17. J. Tal. Kiddushin 59a. It is interesting to note that in both these passages Aquila is referred to as עקילס הגר = Aquila, the proselyte.
18. "... scribe et Pharisaei quorum suscepit scholam Akybas, quem magistrum Aquilae proselyte autumant". (Jerome's commentary on Isaiah at 7.14)
19. Swete, op. cit. p.32. It should be noted that Barthélemy implies no ambiguity as to the identity of Aquila's teacher when he writes, "... les sources chrétiennes et rabbiniques s'accordent pour faire du 'prosélyte Aquila' un disciple d'Aqiba". (op. cit. p.15)
20. That Aquila was a translator is beyond doubt; cf. references in the Jerusalem Talmud - תירגם עקילס הגר לפני ר' עקיב' (Kiddushin 59a) and Shabbath 3b, Yoma' 41a.
21. see above p.14
22. This is treated by A.H. McNeile, An Introduction to Ecclesiastes, Cambridge, 1904, pp.117f.; cf. also Barthélemy, op. cit. pp.22-25.

23. Jerome ridiculed Aquila for this peculiarity (Epist. 57, 11) and this has often been the attitude adopted towards it (cf. F. Field, Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt, Vol. I, Oxford, 1875, p. xxiii, who writes of "usus ridiculus praepositionis σύν cum accusativo pro Hebraeo נח ..") In Jerome's letter (which was to Pammachius) he cites the example of Gen. 1.1 where Aquila translates -
 σύν τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ σύν τὴν γῆν . We have already seen that Akiba attached exegetical importance to the occurrences of נח in this passage. Aquila's translation demonstrates that for him too the particle carried significance.
24. A.E. Silverstone thinks he did, op. cit. p.73.
25. Burkitt, Fragments pp.12f.
26. McNeile, op. cit. p.118.
27. Barthélemy, op. cit. pp.15-21. He discovers four rules which are followed by Aquila:
1. When נח is followed by a noun without the article (i.e. in the construct state or a proper noun), it is translated by the Greek article. This is sufficient to show the presence of the particle, since the Hebrew article would not be present in such a situation.
 2. When נח is followed by the Hebrew article (which

Aquila faithfully translates by the Greek article) its presence must be indicated in another way. Aquila chooses the adverb *σύν*.

3. When *אֵל* is followed by *לְ* Aquila translates it regularly by *σύν*.
 4. When *אֵל* has a personal suffix there is nothing to represent it in Aquila's rendering.
 28. Barthélemy, *ibid.* pp.21-27.
 29. Barthélemy is confident that these rules are sufficiently characteristic of Aquila to allow us to recognise a translation made by him. *op. cit.* p.18.
- It should be noted here that when Barthélemy claims that Aquila is using *σύν* as an adverb, he is not the first to suggest it (cf. Burkitt, "Aquila", p.210) though Jellicoe writes as if he was (*op. cit.* p.81)
30. See Graetz, *op. cit.* pp.173-179. A. Dillmann, "Über die griechische Übersetzung des Qoheleth", Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Berlin, 1892, i, pp.3-16.
 31. This tendency is not exclusively Aquilan. cf. E. Podechard, L'Ecclésiaste, Paris, 1912, p.204, and see below.
 32. Burkitt, Fragments, p.13.
 33. *אֵל* does occur in 5.15 but McNeile feels that the phraseology here savours of the style of Symmachus. (*op. cit.*

p.160.)

34. The columns of the Hexapla are as follows:

1. The Hebrew text
2. The same text transcribed in Greek letters
3. Aquila's translation
4. Symmachus's translation
5. The Septuagint translation
6. Theodotion's translation.

35. B. de Montfaucon, op. cit. pp.47f.

36. "Aquilae vero secunda editio, quam Hebraei κατὰ

ἀκριβείαν nominant, transtulit" (Jerome's

Commentary on Ezekiel at 2.15; cf. also his commentaries on Daniel at 1.3 and Jeremiah at 8.17.) Podechard claims that Jerome refers to this second edition of Aquila on twenty-seven occasions in these commentaries, (Podechard, op. cit. p.203 n.1).

37. Graetz, op. cit. p.179. He is followed by McNeile (op. cit. pp.115f.), G.A. Barton (A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ecclesiastes, Edinburgh, 1908, pp.9f.) and more recently, by Gordis, op. cit. p.126.

38. Dillmann feels that because Origen, Jerome and the Syrohexapla refer to the Greek text as being "according to the LXX", the author cannot be Aquila; hence his strange position. (ibid. p.10.) But he may be

overlooking the fact that he is dealing with an uncritical age (McNeile, *ibid.* p.133).

39. Barthélemy, *op. cit.* p.30. He argues (pp.26-30) that the characteristics of the 'Aquilan' fragments of Ecclesiastes are more typical of Symmachus than Aquila.

That an Aquilan version of Ecclesiastes might enter the Septuagintal canon has its analogy in the official LXX of Daniel, which is basically the rendering of Theodotion". (Gordis, *op. cit.* p.126)

40. The Mishnah records the friction among the Rabbis - Yadaim 3.5; Eduyoth 5.3. Its contradictions were a matter for concern (B. Tal. Shabbath 30b); it was thought to be composed of mere sayings and so not true scripture (Aboth according to R. Nathan, ch. 1); its wisdom was that of Solomon and not of God (B. Tal. Megillah 7a); it tended to promote scepticism (Koh. Rabbah 1.3; Lev. Rabbah 28.1; Pesikta de Rab Kahana, piska 8; Jerome, *op. cit.* 1172.)
41. That a 'Christian' translation existed earlier than Aquila is probably less likely. "In the early part of the Christian era Cohoeleth seems not to have been in great favour with the Fathers of the Church, judging from the general silence which prevails about it in the first, second, and a part of the third centuries ... Whether

this silence is owing to the fact that Cohoeleth is nowhere quoted in the New Testament, or to the doubts which existed in the minds of some respecting its canonicity, or to some other cause it is not easy to divine." (C.D. Ginsburg, Cohoeleth, London, 1861, p.99.)

42. The observations which we have already made on the style of the translation are true for the entire Greek text of Ecclesiastes, hence, whether or not it is the work of Aquila, it is reasonable to hold that it is the work of one translator.
43. These examples are merely representative.
44. i.e. 'he will injure..' and 'he will afflict...'
45. It is possible that נמך was in the translator's text and that it was a deliberate alteration, changing the entire tenor of the passage.
46. If it is assumed that Aquila is the translator, his Greek is not in question. Jerome speaks of him as 'eruditissimus linguae Graecae' (Commentary on Isaiah at 49.5), and Swete observes: "That the crudities of Aquila's style are not due to an insufficient vocabulary is clear from his ready use of words belonging to the classical or the literary type when they appear to him to correspond to the Hebrew more closely than the colloquialisms of the LXX." (op. cit. pp.39f.). Field argues (with examples) for his ability in

- Semitic languages (op. cit. vol. 1, p.xxiv) but it must be remembered that Aquila had been a Gentile and had already joined and been expelled from the Christian Church before coming to Judaism. He had not, therefore, begun the study of Hebrew early in life, though the tradition that he only began Hebrew study in his fortieth year (cf. Jellicoe, op. cit. p.79) may be an exaggeration.
47. אֵל לֹא without the definite article is irregular (GK., 117c). It was probably this irregularity which resulted in the Greek translator regarding לֹא as in the construct state and this would be followed by the mistaken interpretation of מְחַנְּה .
48. The Authorised Version seems to have done so: "in the days of my vanity"
49. The noun qualifying the one in the construct state takes the suffix, but the adjectival effect remains and the suffix qualifies both words - 'during my empty life'. cf. J. Weingreen, "The Construct-Genitive Relation in Hebrew Syntax" VT Vol. IV, 1954, pp.50-59.
50. The corruption may have begun with simple dittography i.e.,
 μὴ μὴ ἀνῆς on the part of one copyist followed by a
 'correction' to μὴ μιάνης by another.
51. In both these examples the difficilior lectio is to be preferred.


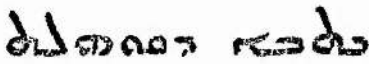
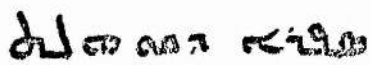
52. see pp. 65-247
53. cf. the treatment of 2.12; 3.15; 4.17; 10.17, 19 and 11.9 in the section dealing with the history of exegesis.
54. GK 121a
55. LXX is followed here by Peshitta (~~ܡܠܟܐ~~) and Targum (רשׁיעא)
56. or 'because the fool speaks abundantly'. It is interesting to note that here again Peshitta follows LXX in the addition of the statement.
57. Podechard. op. cit. p.207.
58. H.W. Hertzberg, op. cit. p.27.
59. cf. Gordis, op. cit. p.126.






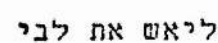
Notes on the Peshitta

1. The pronunciation 'Peshitta' is Nestorian: Monophysites and Maronites say 'Peshitto'; cf. J. Payne Smith. A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, Oxford, 1903, pp.467f.,
2. J. Bloch, "A Critical Examination of the Text of the Syriac Version of the Song of Songs", AJSL 38, 1921, p.103 n.2, B.J. Roberts, op. cit. p.226.
3. Compare the title of Jerome's translation of the Bible - 'Vulgate'.

4. MPC 66, paragraphs 241, 252.
5. R.H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, New York, 1941, p.120, G.A. Barton, op. cit. p.13, A. Jeffery, "Text and Ancient Versions of the Old Testament", The Interpreter's Bible, New York, 1952, Vol. I, p.60.
6. cf. J. Bloch, "The Authorship of the Peshitta", AJSL 35, 1918, pp.215-222, B.J. Roberts, op. cit. p.222.
7. Bloch, *ibid.* p.222.
8. But, cf. Bloch, *ibid.* p.218.
9. F. Buhl, Canon and Text of the Old Testament, Edinburgh, 1892, p.186.
10. cf. Roberts op.cit. p.222.
11. *ibid.* p.221
12. Bloch, *ibid.* p.215, Roberts, *ibid.*
13. quoted by Bloch, *ibid.* p.216
14. The word used, according to Bloch (*ibid.*) is ~~maxim~~
15. Bishop of St. Matthew's cloister, near Mosul, about the middle of 4th century A.D.
16. D. 373 A.D.
17. Jeffery, op. cit. p.60
18. op. cit. p.121, cf also Roberts, op. cit. p.226,
F.C. Burkitt, "Text and Versions", Encyclopaedia Biolica, London, 1903, Vol. IV, col. 5026.

19. Pfeiffer, *ibid.*, Roberts, *ibid.* p.216.
20. Buhl, *op. cit.* p.185, R. Gordis, Koheleth - The Man and His World, New York, 2nd edit., 1955, p.127.
21. cf. C.D. Ginsburg, Koheleth, London, 1861, p.498,
R. Gordis, *op. cit.* p.127, A.S. Kamenetzky, "Die P'sita zu Koheleth textkritisch und in ihrem Verhältniss zu dem massoretischen Text, der Septuaginta und den andern alten griechischen Versionen", ZAW, 1904, p.237.
22. This could not have occurred had the translation been made from LXX. cf. C.D. Ginsburg, *op. cit.* p.498.
23. It is perhaps to be expected that this should be the case since in the post-exilic Old Testament books the name יהוה falls into disuse and אלהים more and more takes its place. The initial reason for the disuse of the divine name may have been reverence for it, or a self-conscious monotheism which felt that God no longer required to be distinguished by name. In the latest books however the name begins to be written again (e.g. Ecclesiasticus), the reason probably being that there was now no longer any danger of its being pronounced: a substitute would always be used in reading e.g. אדני . The Targums reflect this renewed effort to represent the name of God and the Targum of Koheleth is consistent in this respect. cf. the writer's note, viz. R.B. Salters, "The Word for 'God' in

- the Peshitta of Koheleth", VT XXI, 1971, p.252 n.3.
24. "The Authorship of the Peshitta", p.221 n.3.
25. J. Payne Smith, *op. cit.* ad loc.
26. R. Payne Smith, Thesaurus Syriacus II, Oxford, 1901, ad loc.
27. *ibid.*
28. cf. the discussion on the Septuagint and Targum.
29. Compare, for example, 3.17 with the context and with the general tenor of the book. See Barton, *op. cit.* p.43f.
30. The foregoing argument has been taken from the writer's note, *op. cit.* pp.251-254.
31. Usually abbreviated 'a' (see Kamenetzky, *op. cit.* p.182) but to avoid confusion with the indefinite article we employ A.
32. According to Pinkuss the word  appears in A in the superscription of several books in the Old Testament. H. Pinkuss, "Die syrische Uebersetzung der Proverbien", ZAW 14, 1894, p.73, n.2; cf. also Kamenetzky *op. cit.* p.183, n.1
33. Usually abbreviated 'l'; here we employ L.
34. Kamenetzky notes two other forms of the Peshitta superscription, viz.  and  which appear in other texts, *op. cit.* p.183.

35. In L the post-script is merely 
36. see p. 34
37. T. Nöldeke, Compendious Syriac Grammar, (translated by J.A. Crichton), London, 1904, p.227.
38. "For the Hebrew  the Targum has the corresponding  . This ancient Objective mark  is found in the O.T. about a dozen times. That the word was still known in some measure to the Edessans at the time of translating the U.T. we may conclude, from its employment in the ancient Gnostic (Bardesanic ?) Hymn It was completely obsolete in the 4th century." Nöldeke, op. cit. p.226, n.1.
39. cf. Dillmann, op. cit. p.16; Kamenetzky, op. cit. p.204ff. The Koheleth passages are: 2.20; 3.17 (bis); 4.1; 8.9, 15, 17; 9.1 (bis); other Old Testament passages are Gen. 1.1 (bis); 1 Chron. 4.41; Song of Songs 2.7; 3.4, 5; 8.4. It should be noted that at Koheleth 2.20 A and L do not have the sign  ; they do not record the double translation of  as do two other editions (sigla u and m) see Kamenetzky, op. cit. p.185.
40. Dillmann (op. cit., ibid.) attributes their presence in Koheleth to the 'authority of Aquila' but he does not elaborate.

41. That is to say the δ is the result of 'translating' $\eta\kappa$, not of following $\sigma\upsilon\gamma$ in LXX.
42. Whose custom, it would seem, was to render $\eta\kappa$ by the orthodox δ
43. see pp. 65-247
44. Both Dillmann and Kamenetzky are non-committal here. The latter begins by suggesting that the phenomenon is the result of LXX influence but he does not proceed to explain what he means. op. cit. pp.205f.
45. LXX here reads $\sigma\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ 'stubborn, cruel' for $\lambda\kappa\omicron$ but both P and T support MT. $\acute{\alpha}\phi\rho\omega\nu$ is what usually translates $\lambda\kappa\omicron$ in LXX and it is difficult to ascertain how the translation $\sigma\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ arose. LXX usually adheres closely to MT in Ecclesiastes. It is possible that the translator required the idea "cruel" for homiletical purposes - something with a more moral connotation than $\acute{\alpha}\phi\rho\omega\nu$ to support the verb $\gamma\omega\gamma$ "to be wicked". It is interesting and perhaps not without significance that the word he chose begins with the three consonants which comprise the Hebrew word, i.e. $\sigma\kappa\lambda$ -- $\lambda\kappa\omicron$
46. There is no evidence to suggest that these words were inserted at a date later than that of the translation, hence it is more reasonable to assume that they were part of the Syriac original.

47. See p.
48. *ibid.*
49. That the words in LXX do not reflect an underlying Hebrew text is suggested by the fact that Koheleth has ended the verse in a characteristic manner "... this too is emptiness!" The words in LXX are clearly an interpolation and Euringer suggests that they may be related to Luke 6.45 or Matthew 12.34. S. Euringer, Der Masorahstext des Koheleth, Leipzig, 1890, p.52.
50. In the section on the history of the exegesis of certain passages in Ecclesiastes evidence is adduced to the effect that P has occasionally followed LXX especially when the Hebrew is difficult.
51. cf. GK. 114 p.
52. cf. Gordis, *op. cit.* p.289
53. Gordis feels that this is an example of "tacit correction by the translator" *op. cit.* p.290, while some delete לטוב from MT altogether, cf. BH³. T, though a bit paraphrastic here, does not testify to לטוב .
54. cf. the Versions and the history of the exegesis.
F. Ellermeier, "Das Verbum חרש in Koh. 2.25", ZAW 75, 1963, pp.197-217
55. cf. Ellermeier, *ibid.*

56. cf. also O. Loretz, Qohelet und der Alte Orient, Freiburg, 1964, p.245
57. "Codex Syro-Hexaplaris Ambrosianus", photolithographice editus curante et adnotante A.M. Ceriani, Monumenta Sacra et Profana, Vol. VII, Milan, 1874, ad loc. margin.
58. It is interesting to note that Sⁿ also reads ~~Q~~ ~~an~~ here and not ~~Q~~ ~~an~~ as might be expected in the Syriac translation of the fifth column of Origen's Hexapla.
59. Barton, op. cit. p.97.
50. The examples cited are merely representative; others are shown in section III pp. 65-247
61. "That there really exists a possible relation between the LXX and the Peshitta as a whole one cannot always doubt. But to determine this possible relationship is not so simple a matter." Bloch, "The Influence of the Greek Bible on the Peshitta", AJSL Vol. 36, 1920, p.165.
62. cf. Gordis, op. cit. pp.131f.
63. The fact that P can be independent of LXX draws attention to its value as a tool in textual criticism. The Peshitta has often, at best, played second fiddle to the other versions in this respect and, at worst, has been entirely neglected. cf. Bloch, *ibid.* p.161.
64. op. cit. p.236.
65. op. cit. p.210.

66. op. cit. p.14.
67. W.E. Barnes, "On the Influence of the Septuagint on the Peshitta", JTS 2, 1901, p.197.

Notes on the Targum

1. From תרגם a quadraliteral root meaning 'to interpret' or 'to translate' (BDB, 1076) The root appears in the Old Testament in the form of the passive participle מתרגם at Ezra 4.7 where there is a reference to a letter in the Aramaic language.
2. cf. W.O.E. Oesterley and C.H. Box, The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue, London, 1907, p.44; cf. also P. Churgin, Targum Kethubim, New York, 1945, p.187, who uses the term to refer to the Greek and Syriac translations of the Old Testament.
3. It is the Biblical reference, Ezra 4.7, which has led to this particular application.
4. cf. Roberts, op. cit. p.197; T. Walker, art. "Targum", HDB IV, p.678.
5. Daniel 2.4 - 7.28; Ezra 4.8 - 6.18; 7.22 - 26. Among the Jews in Egypt Greek replaced Hebrew as the spoken

tongue and this gave rise to the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures. In Palestine, however, since the official language of the Persian empire was Aramaic, it became the language spoken by the Jewish people, though it must not be supposed that this was a sudden take-over or that Hebrew faded out completely. Other 'late' books were written in Hebrew (e.g. Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus), and the Dead Sea Scrolls also testify to the important position held by the Hebrew language at an even later date. cf. J. Bowker, "The Targums and Rabbinic Literature", Cambridge, 1969, p.3.

6. Megillah 4.4.
7. Walker, op. cit. p.678.
8. J. Tal. Megillah 4.1
9. Roberts points out that this prohibition did not cover the actual writing out of a translation but merely its being read in synagogue, since this would have served to attribute to the translation the reverence due only to the Hebrew text. (Roberts, op. cit. p.197)
10. In the Talmud, reference is made to a Targum of Job existing in the days of Gamaliel I, i.e. in the first century A.D. (B. Tal. Shabbath, 115a) The official Targums of Onkelos (Pentateuch) and Jonathan (Prophets) are 'final forms', behind which lies a long history of

development; it is now generally held that these Targums displaced earlier Targums. For a full account, see Roberts, op. cit. pp.199-209.

11. Roberts, op. cit. p.209.
12. According to Barton they are first referred to in the Dictionary of Nathan ben Jehiel, which was completed in 1101 A.D. (Barton, op. cit. p.16)
13. Melamed argues (R.H. Melamed, "The Targum to Canticles according to six Yemen MSS. compared with the 'Textus Receptus' (Ed. de Lagarde)" JQR, X, 1919-20, p.381) that the Targum to Song of Songs was written in the eighth century, while that to Chronicles is basically from the fourth century (ibid. n.18). C.D. Ginsburg (op. cit. p.36, n.1) states that the Targum to Koheleth was composed as early as late fifth or early sixth century A.D. while Churgin claims that it was written before the Arab conquest of Palestine in 636 A.D. (op. cit. p.188)
14. op. cit. p.199.
15. That is to say they do not spell out the name of God יהוה ; but they represent it by variations of the form יי , or allude to it by the term שמא .
16. It must be kept in mind that, because the Targums were originally mainly oral, with no standard version, the Targum stands on a different footing to that of the other

versions. Further, we cannot speak of "the Targum of Esther" since there are no less than three Targums to this book. A. Sperber describes the Targum to Esther, which he presents in his work on the Targums, as "a misnomer for midrash", (A. Sperber (editor), The Bible in Aramaic, Leiden, 1968, vol. IV A, p.169), though Roberts indicates that one of the other Esther Targums is "fairly literal", (op. cit. p.210). Nor may we speak of the Targums to Daniel or Ezra-Nehemiah since no Targums to these books are known to exist.

17. E. Würthwein, The Text of the Old Testament (translated by P.R. Ackroyd), Oxford, 1957, p.57.
18. cf. Roberts, op. cit. p.211
19. Mikraoth Gedoloth, (מִקְרָאֹת גְּדוֹלוֹת) Vol. 4, Jerusalem, 1961.
20. Sperber (see n. 16 above) reproduces the text of a MS. in the British Museum, Or. 2375, and adds, in the appropriate places, words which appear in Jacob ben Chayim's Bible (1524/5); these 'additions' are indicated by being left unvocalised. (Sperber, op. cit. p.vii).
21. A. Levy, Das Targum zu Koheleth nach südarabischen Handschriften, Breslau, 1905.
22. cf. Churgin, op. cit. p.167
23. Sperber, op. cit. p.125; this is to distinguish it from the Targum to Ruth where translation and midrashic

commentary are easily differentiated.

24. or Koheleth Rabbah. The terms 'Midrash Rabbah' (when speaking of the Book of Koheleth) and 'Koheleth Rabbah' are used interchangeably in this study.
25. Attention will be drawn, in due course, to the similarities between the Midrash Rabbah and the Targum.
26. That is to say it deals with the Hebrew original, verse by verse; cf. Midrash Rabbah which does not comment upon every passage but which may be very elaborate in commenting on selected passages.
27. cf. the frequent phrase in the Midrash Rabbah וְגַם =
 דבר אחר "another interpretation (is this) ..."
29. It must not be assumed that the Targum to 10.10 was an entirely free composition on the part of the translator, as a comparison with Midrash Rabbah (ad loc.) demonstrates. There we read that Rabbi b. Papa said in the name of Rabbi Judah b. Rabbi Simon:

אם נתקדו שמים שעל ראשיכם כברזל המד"א (ויקרא כו) ונתתי
 אח שמיכם כברזל ואין הקב"ה מסביר פנים קלוקל מעשים יש
 בדור מה יעשו יגזרו תענית והקדוש ב"ה מרויח לעולמו

"If the heavens above your heads become unyielding
 like iron - even as you read in the Scriptures

(Lev. 26) 'And I will make your heavens like iron'. -

and the Holy One, blessed be He, does not act favourably, there is corruption of deeds among that generation. What should they do? They should decree a fast, and the Holy One, blessed be He, will bring relief to his world".

There is a definite connection between T and Midrash Rabbah at this point.

29. E. Tal. Horayoth 10b, and Yalkut Shemoni (ad loc.) both attribute this exposition to R. Nahman b. Hisda. It is based on reading the relative אשר as אשרי "Happy are the righteous ..." and וְיָ as וְיָי "Woe there is to the guilty ..."
30. ad loc.; the statement is unexplained; it is simply: "Happy are the righteous guilty in this world: woe to the guilty"; but the implications are clear.
31. cf. McNeile, op. cit. p.75
32. Jerome, op. cit. 1125.
33. 79, according to Barton, op. cit. p.148.
34. V nemo est qui semper vivat "There is no one who always lives ..." has misinterpreted here, and it is difficult to know what text lies behind the latin though it is likely that it was יחַוֵּר , and that Jerome took the expression "to be joined to the living" as having the sense of living continually.

35. op. cit. p.178
36. cf. 6.12 and 5.7; Koheleth's complaint is not that he doesn't know the past but that he is ignorant of the future. Hence to emphasise this (by repeating יחיה) is not out of place.
37. 1.2,12; 3.11,12; 4.15; 7.27; 9.7,11; 10.7,9; 12.8,9.10.
38. e.g. in 1.13 which follows on from 1.12 where Solomon is expressly mentioned; 2.18; 3.14 etc.
39. The Targum actually begins: "The words of prophecy ..", and, of the thirteen direct references to Solomon in the Targum only four do not allude to him as a prophet (1.12; 7.27; 9.11; 12.8). This viewpoint is shared by Koheleth Rabbah (on 1.1), "Three prophets whose prophecy, because it savoured of reproach, was attributed to them personally, are: The words of Koheleth ... the words of Amos (Amos 1.1) and the words of Jeremiah ... (Jer. 1.1)..."
40. And again at 4.15
41. That is to say he transgresses the command in Deut. 17.16f. which forbids the king to multiply horses, wives and treasure.
42. אַשְׁמֹדַי . The name is variously represented, some Ashmodai, others, Asmodeus.

43. L. Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews, Philadelphia, 1936, Vol. IV, pp.165-172. Since the Rabbis disagreed about the true worth of the reign of Solomon, and even of his whereabouts in the world to come, there are, not surprisingly, various versions of this legend (see M. Seligsohn, art. "Solomon", JE Vol. XI, pp.436-448). One of the more bizarre describes the dethronement. Ashm'day swallows Solomon and then spits him four hundred parasangs away from Jerusalem; he then takes Solomon's place on the throne unknown to the Sanhedrin. On restoration, Solomon kept sixty armed men around his bed for fear of a repeat performance.
44. A. Jellinek, Bet ha-Midrash, Leipzig, 1853, Vol. 2, pp.86-87
45. That is Koh. 7.15.
46. cf. notes 28, 29 and 30 above in connection with 10.10 and 8.14; this relationship is also seen from the discussion on 1.12.
47. Further examples are also to be found in the section dealing with the history of exegesis.
48. It may be more accurate to say that the Targumist leaned heavily upon existing midrashim, used also by the compilers of Kohemoth Rabbah, since we cannot be certain

as to when the latter was edited or the date of the Targum.

49. It is interesting to note that the Midrash Rabbah, after opening with "I made myself gardens and parks", comments:
 כמשמער = "in its ordinary sense", that is, as
 opposed to the fanciful interpretations commonly employed.
50. The Midrash Rabbah here is virtually the same as that in Yalkut Shemoni (ad loc.).
51. See 2 Sam. 20. The Targum does not mention David by name but this is the incident to which it refers.
52. On the idea of God making everything beautiful in its time the Midrash Rabbah offers various examples.
53. i.e. "the world"
54. i.e. "it was concealed". The interpretation is obtained by a play on the word העולם.
55. cf. the reference in T to God concealing the Name "because he knew the evil inclination of their heart".
56. The reference to the concealing of the day of death is found in Yalkut Shemoni (ad loc.)
57. cf. also Yalkut Shemoni (at 2.24)
58. By applying it, not to life in general, but (by means of depicting Solomon as a prophet) to disastrous events in the history of Israel.

59. There are numerous passages where "this world" and "the world to come" are used by the Targumist to instruct his readers to study the Law and to do good in this life, and which call attention away from the main thrust of the passage in the original. e.g. 2.11,25,26; 5.5,12.
60. Such references to the Sanhedrin, Moses, Abraham, Hezekiah and Rehoboam, together with the mention of the Shecinah, King Messiah and the Torah, and the rendering of אלהים by יי, serve to produce a national and a historical flavour to the version which is not to be found in the original.
61. For example ליקרותיה "to honour him" at 12.1, and לדריא קדמאין "to former generations" at 1.11.

Notes on Selected Passages

1. Rashbam was the first to make the observation that vv.1f. are not the work of the author of the book proper. See the translation of his commentary at 1.2; cf. also Barton, op. cit. p.44, Rodechard, op. cit. p.232, Graetz, op. cit. p.54, Gordis, op. cit. p.194 et al.
2. Koheleth Rabbah draws attention to this (ad loc.); cf. also Prov. 30.1; 31.1
3. such as Proverbs, Song of Songs, Isaiah, Hosea, Joel and Micah.
4. 1.1,2,12; 7.27; 12.8,9.10
5. such as Mishnah, Talmud etc.
6. cf. Est. 8.11; 9.2; Ex. 32.1; Jer. 26.9; 2 Sam. 20.14 (Qere); Nu. 17.7; Ezek. 38.7
7. cf. Ex. 35.1; Nu. 1.18; 8.9; 20.10; Lev. 8.3; 1 K. 3.1; 2 Chr. 5.2; Jb. 11.10; Ezek. 38.13
8. BDB, p.875
9. KB, p.829
10. cf. Barton, op. cit. p.68; it is interesting to note that Sh reads **הלנו** here.

11. The Vulgate rendering is strange here; if Jerome had thought that קהל was a proper noun, he could have transliterated the Hebrew and not the Greek; if he had felt the word to be descriptive of a function, then the latin equivalent is called for; and if he thought the word to be both a proper noun and yet descriptive of a function, then the latin equivalent is what is again desiderated, not a latinised form of a Greek word.
12. Jerome, op. cit., 1063.
13. Koheleth Rabbah on 1.1.
14. וי"א שהיה אומר כל דבריו בהקל
15. ... על שם שקיהל חכמות ... Rashbam uses the Piel and Rashi, the Hiphil. This explanation seems to imply that the Qal part. serves as the part. of the Hiphil in much the same way as דָּבַר (Ps. 15.2; Am. 5.10; Is. 33.15) and כָּלַב (Ps. 116.11) serve the sense of the Piel part.. But against this is the fact that the root קהל, both in Niphal and Hiphil, is always used of people, never of things. Even in late and modern Hebrew it is confined to people.
16. cf. previous note. It should be noted that Koheleth Rabbah, Rashi, Rashbam and Ibn Ezra see 'Koheleth' as another name for Solomon.

17. Obadiah ben Jacob Sforno (d. 1550), Commentary on Ecclesiastes in Mikraoth Gedoloth, ad loc.
18. Moses Mendelssohn, Sepher Megillath Koheleth, Berlin, 1770, ad loc.
19. M. Luther, "Annotationes in Ecclesiasten" (1532) Luthers Werke, Band 20, Weimar, 1898, p.14
20. cf. LXX εἶπεν ὁ ἐκκλησιαστής , and note also 12.8 where the definite article occurs again with קהלת
21. cf. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. pp.7f.
22. קהלת . נפש שכלית שאספה אליה כל החכמות Sforno probably gets this explanation from Rashbam on 7.27, where he explains MT in this way.
23. W. Wright, A Grammar of the Arabic Language, London, 1874, Vol. I, p.157
24. GK, 112 r
25. KB takes פכרת to mean 'pitfall' p.759.
26. In some cases this developed into 'Smithson'.
27. 2 Sam. 5.5; 1 K. 2.10; 11.42 et passim
28. Prov. 1.1.
29. In the light of Prov. 1.1 and Eccles. 1.12 he might feel justified in so doing.
30. See the discussion in the section on the Targum, pp. 47-64
31. 12.8; from the time of Rashbam 12.9-14 has been thought to be the work of an editor.

32. cf. also M. Jastrow, Jr., op. cit. p.201, n.1
33. cf. D.C. Siegfried, "Prediger und Hoheslied", HAT 1899, p.28, et al.
34. W. Johnstone, "The Preacher as Scientist", SJT, 1967, p.211.
35. The Syriac means 'vapour' and is used only in a physical sense; Jerome in fact confirms that Sh refers to ἀτμός
op. cit. 1066.
36. GK, 133 i
37. GK, 133 k
38. F. Delitzsch, op. cit. p.219
39. C.H.H. Wright, The Book of Koheleth, London, 1883, p.305; Barton, op. cit. p.72.
40. Jerome, op. cit. 1066; cf. S. Euringer, op. cit. p.31.
41. W.E. Staples, "The Vanity of Ecclesiastes", JNES 2, 1943, pp.95f.
42. cf. T.J. Meek, "Translating the Hebrew Bible", JBL 79, 1960, pp.330f.
43. cf. Koheleth Rabbah, ad loc. "At a year he is like a king ... At two and three years he is like a pig At ten years he skips like a young goat. At twenty years old he is like a horse neighing ... When he is married he is like an ass. When he has children he becomes brazen like a dog ... When he gets old he is like an ape. This is said of the common people, but of those who know

the Torah, it is written: 'King David was old' (1 K. 1.1) - although he was old he was still a king".


The Rabban also indicates that the seven הנללים correspond to the seven days in Genesis (i.e. of creation), a midrash which is also recorded in Yalkut Shemoni and Rashi.

44. cf. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.259f.; C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.306.

45. Luther, op. cit. p.16

46. H.L. Ginsberg, Studies in Koheleth, New York, 1950, pp.1,3 (n.2a); but cf. A.F. Rainey, "A Second Look at Amal in Qoheleth", CTM 36, 1965, p.805.

47. cf. also the Assyrian 'nimelu' 'gain, possession'

48. Ginsberg holds that the root is used in Syriac to mean 'gain' viz. in the Peshitta of Ps. 128.2 where  is used to translate יגיע but it should be noted here that, on his reasoning, LXX κόπος, V'labor', Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion κόπος - the respective renderings of יגיע (Ps. 128.2) - would all have the meaning 'gain' at this point. The word

יגיע can mean 'toil' as well as 'result or product of toil' (and in Ps. 128.2 it has the latter meaning), but it does not follow that when an attempt is made to translate the word that the translator has perceived the

correct sense or nuance.

49. D.G. Wildeboer, "Der Prediger", KHAT 17, 1898, p.123.
50. Graetz, op. cit. p.183.
51. cf. G.A. Cooke, A Text-Book of North-Semitic Inscriptions, Oxford, 1903, pp.26, 30.
52. McNeile, op. cit. pp.39f.
53. with Podachard, op. cit. p.235; Lorétz argues that the appearance of the phrase in the inscriptions rules out the possibility of its Greek origin, op. cit. p.47.
54. cf. the Targum
55. 'above the sun' must mean 'in the world to come'.
56. see p. 306
57. In modern translations such a problem is dealt with by supplying, in the translation, the word or phrase in the original language, e.g. 'Sitz im Leben'.
58. This reference to Mal. 3.12 is also to be found in Kohelath Rabbah (ad loc.) which states that the meaning of Koh. 1.4 can be: "A kingdom comes and a kingdom goes but Israel remains for ever". cf. also Yalkut Shemoni (ad loc.)
59. see p. 306f.
60. P. Joüon, "Notes Philologiques sur le texte Hébreu d'Ecclésiaste", Biblica 11, 1930, p.419.
61. BH³ ad loc.

62. GK, 112 k
63. cf. BDB, n.983; KB, n.937; GK, 72 p.
64. Delitzsch, op. cit. p.221
65. E.W. Hengstenberg, Commentary on Ecclesiastes, with other Treatises, (translated by D.W. Simon), Edinburgh, 1868, p.52.
66. e.g. Graetz, op. cit. p.56; J. Montgomery, "Notes on Ecclesiastes", JBL 1924, p.242; Jouon, op. cit. p.419; et al.
67. op. cit. p.150
68. op. cit. p.2
69. op. cit. 1067.
70. op. cit. p.56
71. op. cit. p.419.
72. Hertzberg, op. cit. p.67, R.B.Y. Scott, Proverbs-Ecclesiastes, New York, 1965, p.210.
73. op. cit. p.242
74. op. cit. p.262.
75. Translation: "It goes through the south by day and turns round to the north by night via the deep, round and round; it goes in the direction of the south corner in the circuit of Nisan and Tamuz, and upon its circuits returns in the direction of the north corner in the circuit of Tishri and Tebeth; it goes through the chambers of the

east in the morning, and through the western chambers in the evening".

76. op. cit. p.56.

77. It is not that Koheleth knows or thinks he knows the path of the wind; he knows that whatever way the wind blows - and it blows in various directions - it returns to these paths. The regularity of it all compares with the earth 'remaining'.

78. EK, 130 c.

79. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.263; Delitzsch, op. cit. pp.222f.; McNeile, op. cit. p.95; Podechard, op. cit. p.240; Gordis, op. cit. pp.196f.; Scott, op. cit. p.210; RSV and JB.

80. Luther, op. cit. pp.20f.; Graetz, op. cit. p.57; K. Galling, "Der Prediger" HAT 18, 1969, p.85; A. Barucq, Ecclésiaste, Paris, 1967, p.57; and NEB.

81. The root קָנָה is used by Sh to translate LXX here.

82. contra Delitzsch, op. cit. p.223.

83. op. cit. 1070.

84. Among those who translate "All things" are: Luther, op. cit. p.22, Delitzsch, op. cit. p.223, Podechard, op. cit. p.241, McNeile, op. cit. p.95, Gordis, op. cit. p.197, Graetz, op. cit. p.57, RSV, JB, NEB.

Among those who translate "All words" are: C.D. Ginsburg,

- op. cit. pp.263f., Hengstenberg, op. cit. p.54,
Hertzberg, op. cit. p.72, Galling, op. cit. p.85, Scott,
op. cit. p.210, Barucq, op. cit. p.57.
85. "Omnes sermones graves .." op. cit. 1070.
86. Those that understand יגעים as 'weary' are:
C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. pp.263, Hengstenberg, op. cit.
p.54, Galling, op. cit. p.85, Scott, op. cit. p.210,
Barucq, op. cit. p.57, McNeile, op. cit. p.95, RSV.
87. cf. Gordis, p.197 JB, NEB et al.
88. T. Tyler, Ecclesiastes, London, 1874, p.14. The Stoics
taught that the history of the world was cyclic, and that
at the end of each cycle everything was destroyed by
flood or fire, and a new world course began where the
details of the former history would be repeated.
89. H. Ranston, Ecclesiastes and the early Greek Wisdom
Literature, London, 1925, p.72; cf. also Barton, op. cit.
p.35, Gordis, op. cit. p.52, Loretz, op. cit. p.51,
C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.314.
90. GK, 137 c
91. cf. Delitzsch, op. cit. pp.224f.
92. cf. C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.314
93. Delitzsch, *ibid.*
94. כמי שלא נפל גורלו (Damascus Document 20.4)
95. M. Segal, A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew, Oxford, 1927, p.209f.

96. op. cit. p.75.
97. This resemblance to LXX may be the result of V dependence upon LXX. We note that Jerome, in his commentary, has the same understanding of the text. op. cit. 1070.
98. op. cit. pp.23f.
99. J. Payne Smith, op. cit. p.203.
100. op. cit. p.198
101. C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.315
102. ibid., cf. also Delitzsch, op. cit. p.225, Gordis, op. cit. pp.197f.
103. Barton, op. cit. p.75, McNeile, op. cit. p.138
104. Jerome, op. cit. 1071.
105. op. cit. p.225
106. op. cit. p.76
107. ibid.
108. op. cit. p.198
109. In Syriac, this form (m. pl.) refers to 'those of old' while the f. pl. has the meaning 'former things'. cf. J. Payne Smith, op. cit. p.490.
110. op. cit. 1072.
111. see p. 308.
112. op. cit. p.23.
113. AV, Dale, op. cit. pp.6f., Graetz, op. cit. p.57, M. Jastrow, Jr., op. cit. p.203, RSV, JB, H.L. Ginsberg,

- Kohelath, Tel Aviv, 1961, p.62, Baruch, op. cit. p.57.
114. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.267, Delitzsch, op. cit. p.225, Barton, op. cit. p.76, Galling, op. cit. p.85, Hertzberg, op. cit. p.68, Gordis, op. cit. p.198, NES.
115. see Kohelath Rabbah on 2.12.
116. Luther, op. cit. p.33.
117. It is quite possible, however, that having translated שכלות as "understanding" the translator himself felt that the sense desiderated here was of a similar nature and chose "parables".
118. But הללות cannot have this meaning in Biblical Hebrew. (cf. BDH, p.239) though it does have such a meaning in post-biblical Hebrew.
119. op. cit. ibid.
120. e.g. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.274, who feels that the error is due to an imitation of 2.12.
121. e.g. M. Jastrow Jr., op. cit. pp.204f., n.16.
122. op. cit. p.203
123. op. cit. p.79.
124. J. Payne Smith, op. cit. p.182; it is interesting to note that P uses the word לָמַד for לָמַד in 6.9.
125. cf. Mendelssohn, ad loc.
126. op. cit. p.33

127. Dale, op. cit. p.8 follows V 'vexation of spirit', while most others render 'striving after wind' or the like, cf. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.274, Podechard, op. cit. p.257, Delitzsch, op. cit. p.227, Hertzberg, op. cit. p.74, Barucq, op. cit. p.63, JB, RSV, NEB.
128. cf. McNeile, op. cit. p.57, KB ad loc.
129. op. cit. p.139.
130. op. cit. p.234
131. op. cit. p.206
132. G.R. Driver, "Problems and Solutions" VT 4, 1954, p.226.
133. cf. Ps. 104.15 where נַפְשׁוֹ and יָדָיו are linked together.
134. op. cit. p.38.
135. lit. 'his flesh', which Ibn Ezra notes means 'his body'; but Rashbam rightly defines it עֲצָמוֹ 'himself' (cf. 5.5.) The emphasis may be on the senses.
136. It is remarkable how often Jerome is influenced by Symmachus in his renderings.
137. op. cit. p.210
138. This observation supports our suspicion that LXX is corrupt.
139. op. cit. p.210
140. J. Payne Smith, op. cit. p.10
141. cf. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.31, No. 5.

142. op. cit. pp.39f.
143. We have had to conjecture as to the emendation adopted by NEB here since the deliberations of the translators have not been published.
144. op. cit. p.206.
145. cf. ~~אֶלֶּם~~ אֶלֶּם 'a few days', J. Payne Smith, op. cit. p.282.
146. op. cit. p.38
147. cf. Kamenetzky, op. cit. pp.184f.
148. ibid. p.185.
149. cf. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.288
150. It is possible that תִּלְלִיָּה should be vocalised תִּלְלִיָּה (cf. BDB ad loc. and see 10.13 where it does have this vocalisation). Although Aq. and Theod. (κλάνας 'errors'), V and probably T take it as a plural noun, LXX and Sym. (κλανην 'error, wandering') see it as a singular abstract noun. If it were vocalised תִּלְלִיָּה it would be more appropriately linked with תִּלְלִיָּה .
151. cf. Siegfried, op. cit. p.35, Galling, op. cit. p.90, W. Zimmerli, "Prediger", ATD 16/1, 1962, p.160, Scott, op. cit. p.216.
152. op. cit. p.35.
153. op. cit. pp.209f., cf. Hertzberg, op. cit. p.76.




154. op. cit. p.140, cf. Graetz, op. cit. p.62.
155. op. cit. ibid.
156. op. cit. p.51, that is to say in addition to LXX.
157. op. cit. pp.62f.
158. op. cit. p.129
159. op. cit. p.210
160. It should be noted that ~~ܐܠܗܐ ܕܥܕܢܐ~~ is normal Syriac, cf. J. Payne Smith, op. cit. p.31, and S^h ad loc.
161. contra C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.334, McNeile, op. cit. p.60, and probably Gordis, op. cit. p.210, though it is uncertain as to what translation the latter would offer for the Syriac here.
162. It should be noted that although the Midrash comments in this way, there is no doubt that the compilers of these midrashim had עשרה before them. The plural is explained as referring to 'God and Beth Din'.
163. op. cit. pp.44, 48.
164. M. Jastrow, Jr., op. cit. p.207, n.30
165. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.290, Delitzsch, op. cit, p.244, Barucq, op. cit. p.69, JB.
166. op. cit. pp.34f.
167. op. cit. p.216.
168. H.L. Ginsberg, op. cit. p.8
169. Barucq, op. cit. p.69

170. op. cit. p.9
171. Zimmerli, op. cit. p.160f.
172. op. cit. p.65.
173. op. cit. p.9, cf. also Galling, op. cit. pp.90f who reads אֲחֵרִי and who takes קִסְלָה to be a gloss.
174. H.L. Ginsberg, op. cit. p.9.
175. ibid. pp.12-15
176. cf. GK, 75 v
177. op. cit. p.9.
178. This anomaly is used by Dahood to support his claim for a Phoenician background to the book, M.J. Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence in Qoheleth", Biblica 33, 1952, pp.45f.
179. Galling, op. cit. p.93.
180. op. cit. p.226
181. op. cit. p.71f.
182. Kamenetzky, op. cit. p.215.
183. M. Jastrow, Jr., op. cit. p.211, n.48.
184. op. cit. pp.56ff.
185. taken from C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.345.
186. op. cit. p.65.
187. op. cit. p.226
188. cf. C.V. Ginsburg, McNeile, Podechard, Galling, Zimmerli RSV, NEB et al.

189. op. cit. p.221
 190. op. cit. p.111
 191. op. cit. p.71
 192. op. cit. p.76, cf. also JB.
 193. cf. C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.357, Gordis, op. cit. p.237.
 194. op. cit. p.142
 195. It is also possible that the LXX translator mis-read א
for ד - these two letters are easily confused.
 196. Scott, op. cit. p.226
 197. Rashbam interprets the phrase 'watch your foot' ~ "... for
you should walk in purity, in innocence and in humility,
You should even go barefoot when you go to seek God, to
pray in the Temple ..."
- Koheleth Rabbah interprets in various ways. "No
one may enter the Temple Mount ... with dust on his feet
...", "A man should not pray if he feels the need to
relieve himself ... because it is written Guard your
foot .. that is, from the drops (of urine) which are
between your legs ... Be clean!"
198. cf. also Koheleth Rabbah, ad loc., and Rashbam.
 199. GK, 113 bb
 200. L (Lee's edition) has the singular here.
 201. op. cit. p.86
 202. op. cit. p.335

203. op. cit. p.226
204. op. cit. p.283
205. op. cit. p.291
206. op. cit. p.122
207. op. cit. p.68
208. op. cit. p.113.
209. This is contrary to C.D. Ginsburg whose translation "...
as they who obey know not to do evil" is unsound.
210. op. cit. p.217
211. op. cit. p.238
212. i.e. through haplography?
213. op. cit. p.138
214. e.g. Barton, op. cit. p.125, McNeile, op. cit. p.68
215. op. cit. p.82
216. op. cit. p.283
217. op. cit. p.291
218. op. cit. p.65
219. op. cit. p.49
220. op. cit. p.68
221. op. cit. p.125
222. op. cit. p.99
223. op. cit. p.226
224. J. Schmidt, "Koh. 4.17", ZAW 58, 1940/41, pp.279f.
225. cf. Siegfried, op. cit. pp.49f., McNeile, op. cit. p.25.

226. cf. Barton, op. cit. p.45, M. Jastrow, Jr., op. cit. pp.216f., Gordis, op. cit. pp.236f.
227. Barton, op. cit. p.45.
228. Examples of this figurative use of פה are Is. 29.13; Eccles. 10.13; Prov. 8.29; I Sam. 15.24.
229. The form לחטיא is equivalent to להחטיא i.e. Hiphil infin. construct; cf. Midrash Rabbah, ad loc., GK, 53 q
230. It is unlikely that σαρξ can be taken in any other sense here, though it should be noted that in Gen. 6.12, כל בשר is rendered by LXX πᾶσα σὰρξ, where the meaning must be 'everybody'.
231. cf. Delitzsch, op. cit. p.288, BDB ad loc., McNeile, op. cit. p.68, Gordis, op. cit. p.238.
232. e.g. Graetz, op. cit. p.83, Delitzsch, op. cit. p.288, BDB ad loc., Gordis, op. cit. p.238, Zimmerli, op. cit. p.189.
233. cf. James 3.5
234. cf. C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.360
235. Wright does not refer to Rashbam on this point.
236. cf. M. Jastrow, Jr., op. cit. p.216, Siegfried, op. cit. p.50, Galling, op. cit. p.100, Hertzberg, op. cit. p.119, Barucq, op. cit. p.100, Scott, op. cit. p.226, RSV, JB, NEB.

237. op. cit. pp.68 and 143.
238. op. cit. p.125
239. M. Jastrow, Jr., op. cit. pp.216f.
240. The agreement with P can be pushed too far. We have already observed that the latter version tends, at times, to follow LXX even when MT is obviously underlying both versions.
241. cf. Euringer, op. cit. p.67, Kamenetsky, op. cit. p.217, Podechard, op. cit. p.339.
242. This information is derived from 5^h margin which indicates that Aq., Sym. and Theod. have 
243. Jerome, op. cit. 1106,
244. According to Jastrow  means 'officer' either in a synagogue or court. (Marcus Jastrow, A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature, New York, 1967, p.444.
245. We are assuming that the Targum, which also interprets in this way, was written later. cf. Churgin, op. cit. p.188.
246. It cannot be argued that Midrash Rabbah does not concern itself with angels; there are many instances where the term  is used with that meaning, cf. Kohelath Rabbah at 1.1; 3.14; 4.3; 6.10; 10.11; 12.13.
247. Luther, op. cit. pp.94f.
248. ibid. p.95.

249. See vv. 2, 27-31 especially, where the construction
 חטא בשגגה 'to sin unwittingly' keeps recurring;
 cf. שגגה היא in Eccles. 5,5.
250. op. cit. p.210.
251. cf. Wright, op. cit. p.291, Wildeboer, op. cit. p.139,
 Siegfried, op. cit. pp.19,50, Pöschard, op. cit.
 pp.338f., Hertzberg, op. cit. p.123, Zimmerli, op. cit.
 p.190, Barucq, op. cit. pp.102f.
252. op. cit. p.343
253. SK, p.30
254. Ginsburg cites Deut. 26.3,5 where God and priest are
 severally addressed, the former by אמרת לפני , the
 latter by אמרת אל . Ginsburg claims that the
 phrase אמר לפני is reserved for the Deity, kings,
 and satraps.
255. cf. Barton, op. cit. p.124, M. Jastrow, Jr., op. cit.
 pp.216f., JB, NEB.
256. cf. Graetz, op. cit. pp.82f., Gordis, op. cit. p.239,
 Dahood, op. cit. p.207, Scott, op. cit. pp.226f.
257. cf. Wildeboer, op. cit. pp.70f., Siegfried, op. cit.
 p.54.
258. cf. those of C.D. Ginsburg, Delitzsch and Wright.
259. e.g. Gordis, op. cit. pp.160, 246.

260. We agree with McNeile here (op. cit. p.160) that

πολλὰς is an attempted improvement, to make the word agree with ἡμέρας and not an indication of another Hebrew text.

261. 'not many' referring to the days of the life of any man in the house of Eli. We cannot however be certain how the interpreters of these midrashim took the phrase.

262. op. cit. p.108

263. op. cit. p.356

264. e.g. Rashi יזכור את ימי חייו כי מעט הם ולא הרבה

Ibn Ezra יזכור כי לא הרבה ימי חייו

The latter has to explain away the redundant את in order to achieve his reconstruction, and he does this by reference to 1 Sam. 17.34 where את is also superfluous.

265. viz. "... quia Deus occupat in laetitia cor eius" op. cit. 1111.

266. op. cit. p.144, n.1, cf. Euringer, op. cit. p.74.

267. That the rendering in the commentary does not indicate that Jerome read מענה בשמחה is clearly demonstrated. It is also clear that V does not presuppose מענה בשמחה. The total picture shows that MT underlies these renderings and that Jerome was uncertain as to the meaning of the text before him.

269. cf. Marcus Jastrow, op. cit. p.955
260. cf. BDB and KE ad loc. - the former lists three roots
I answer II be occupied III be afflicted; KE lists
four, viz. I answer II humiliate III be occupied
IV sing.
270. Nor in post-biblical Hebrew.
271. BDB, p.775
272. cf. Jerome's comment "Avocat ..." above.
273. Liddell and Scott indicate that in the LXX, Eccles. 5.19
is the example where περίσχω has the meaning
'to vex' (H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, A Greek-English
Lexicon, (ninth edition), Oxford, 1968, p.1385) - but the
meaning will not fit the context. A look at Sh settles
the matter. Sh שח is Pael part. of שח. In
the margin there is the rather unusual note that this
word translates περίσχω. The very existence of
this note demonstrates that the Greek word was open to
misinterpretation. R. Payne Smith gives the meaning of
שח (Pael) as 'traxit, attraxit' i.e. 'drag, attract'
(op. cit. Vol. II, p.2483 b); hence it would seem that
the LXX translator has taken מענה as the Hiphil part.
from ענה 'to be occupied'.
274. Since P sometimes follows LXX especially in difficult
passages, the agreement between the two versions here

should not be pushed too far.

275. op. cit. p.108

276. C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.371

277. e.g. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.356, Barton, op. cit. p.126, Podechard, op. cit. p.353, Wildeboer, op. cit. p.142, JB, RSV, NEB, Zimmerli, op. cit. p.195, Galling, op. cit. p.102, Scott, op. cit. p.229.

278. e.g. AV, Graetz, op. cit. p.89, Delitzsch, op. cit. p.304, C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.371, Dale, op. cit. p.40, McNeile, op. cit. p.102, Gordis, op. cit. p.246.

279. Mendelssohn is inclined to see here a quotation rather than the words of Koheleth himself - "He is repeating the words of someone who objects to the providence and the judgments of God ..." This is because Mendelssohn, believing that Solomon was the author of the book (cf. Mendelssohn on 1.1) was unable to attribute cynicism to that king.

280. op. cit. 1112.

281. cf. LXX, P, V, Jerome, ibid., T, Sh, Luther, op. cit. p.109, Mendelssohn, Delitzsch, op. cit. p.304, Graetz, op. cit. p.89, Barton, op. cit. p.126, Gordis, op. cit. pp.160,247, Podechard, op. cit. p.354, Hertzberg, op. cit. pp.127,130, Galling, op. cit. p.103, Zimmerli, op. cit. p.196, Scott, op. cit. p.231, Barucq, op. cit. p.109f.

282. C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.372. The Targum of Eccles.
6.2 changes the word order thus: עוֹתֵר וְיִקְרַ וְנִכְסֵיךְ
283. contra C.H.H. Wright, *ibid.*
284. cf. BDB, KB, ad loc.; this is true also in post-biblical Hebrew, cf. Jehudah Gur, Milon ibri (Hebrew), Tel-Aviv, 1952, p.386.
285. It should be noted, however, that he begins his comments by referring to the words עוֹשֵׁר וְנִכְסֵיךְ only.
286. In Koheleth Rabbah כְּבֹרָךְ = Tosefta.
287. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.358.
288. *ibid.*
289. C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.372
290. This is alluded to later in the verse.
291. So Ginsburg, op. cit. p.358; cf. also McNeile, op. cit. p.103, M. Jastrow, Jr., op. cit. p.220, F. Ellermeier, Qohelet, Teil 1, Abschnitt 1, Herzberg 1967, p.294.
" כְּבֹרָךְ heisst hier naturliche entgegen der Meinung vieler Ausleger nicht 'Ehre'. Das Verbum אָכַל verlangt einen ganz konkreten Wert, also 'Besitz'" (Ellermeier, p.295)
292. op. cit. p.305
293. q.v. cf. Ellermeier, *ibid.*
294. In his commentary Jerome renders "manducaret", "eat",

but this is virtually equivalent to the Vulgate (Jerome,
op. cit. 1111.

295. נִנְיָ normally means to taste, but may have the derived meaning 'to enjoy' (G.H. Dalman, Aramäisch - neuhebräisches Wörterbuch zu Targum, Talmud und Midrasch, Frankfurt, 1901, p.163 b.)
296. cf. Marcus Jastrow, op. cit. p.63, Dalman, op. cit. p.16b.
297. op. cit. p.109
298. cf. AV, Hengstenberg, op. cit. p.150, Ginsburg, pp.358f., Graetz, op. cit. p.89.
299. op. cit. pp. 304f. cf. thereafter, Siegfried, op. cit. p.54, M. Jastrow, Jr., p.220, Gordis, op. cit. p.160, Hertzberg, op. cit. p.127, Scott, op. cit. p.231, Galling, op. cit. p.103, Ellermeyer, (Qohelet 1,1) pp. 294f., RSV, JB, NEB.
300. The adjective נִנְיָ occurs at Gen. 42.6 but it is reckoned to be a late substitution for an original 'E' reading, cf. BDB ad loc.
301. cf. KB ad loc.
302. e.g. Dan. 2.39; 3.27; 5.7,16; 6.25 etc.
303. e.g. Targum Gen. 1.16; Targum Onkelos Exod. 21.8 etc.
304. e.g. Ben Sira 4.7 and in the Midrashim and the Talmud (Marcus Jastrow, op. cit. p.1581).
305. see above; he attributes this interpretation to

'Midrash Aggadah'.

306. This sense is conveyed by the partitive יב cf. GK, 119 w, n.2.
307. cf. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.359.
308. e.g. Deut. 14.21; 15.3; 23.21; 2 Sam. 15.19; Prov. 5.10.
309. cf. Ps. 69.9; cf. also BDB and K9 ad loc.
310. cf. BDB ad loc., Marcus Jastrow, op. cit. ad loc, Dalman, op. cit. ad loc.
311. so Jehudah Gur, op. cit. ad loc.
312. i.e. in contrast with 2.19 where he is chiefly concerned about the prospect of his successor, whom he does not know, handling the property which he has acquired.
313. op. cit. p.247.
314. Gordis is probably right in opposing the rendering 'foreigner' for the reason given above, though this is how Galling understands the term. (Galling, op. cit. p.103)
315. It should be noted that after מאדרכו P adds the words מאדרכו לו "after him". Kamenetzky feels that this is contrary to the sense of the Hebrew text (op. cit. p.219), but MT implies that the 'stranger' inherits this wealth and enjoys it. P is spelling out

- the meaning here; there is no implication in the Syriac that the rich man did not live long enough to enjoy his riches.
315. op. cit. 1111.
317. The term used by the Targumist גבר חילוניא can have the meaning 'non-priest' or 'non-Israelite' (see Marcus Jastrow, op. cit. ad loc.), but the point of the paraphrase must be to indicate that the man who inherits is not a child or a relative. The possibility remains, however, that the Targumist was suggesting that this man from another family was an outsider in the faith also.
318. "... he leaves his substance and treasures to other men - men whom he did not beget, who are strangers to him, those from whom he has never had any benefit .."
319. e.g. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.359, Delitzsch, op. cit. p.305, C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.372, Wildeboer, op. cit. p.142, Barton, op. cit. p.129, Podechard, op. cit. pp.354f.
320. op. cit. p.55.
321. op. cit. p.247.
322. cf. Eccles. 4.7f.; 9.9.
323. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. pp.358f.
324. KB, ad loc., NEB

325. i.e. according to the use of letters as numbers

(גימטריה).

$$\text{כְּתוּשִׁיט} = 2 + 400 + 300 + 10 + 300 = 1012$$

$$\text{בְּאִתִּי} = 2 + (300 \times 2) + 400 + 10 = 1012$$

326. For Rabbinic rules for exegesis cf. C.D. Ginsburg,
op. cit. pp.30ff.

327. "It is well for you, O land of Israel, when Hezekiah, son of Ahaz, who is mighty in the law, from the house of David, king of Israel, shall rule over you; and your nobles, after they have offered the daily sacrifice, will eat bread at four hours, as a result of their work, in the strength of the law, and not in weakness or in blindness".

328. op. cit. p.125

329. We disagree with Euringer (op. cit. p.118) who claims that the LXX translator had a text which read בְּשִׁיט. The similarity of בְּשִׁיט to בְּשִׁיט may, however, have led the translator to interpret in this way. cf. C.D. Ginsburg, ibid.

330. "... pro valetudine et non pro luxu". op. cit. p.179.

331. e.g. C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.442, Barton, op. cit. p.178, Scott, op. cit. p.250, AV, RSV, JB.

332. op. cit. p.168

333. op. cit. p.236

334. op. cit. p.193
335. op. cit. p.71.
336. cf. 2.24 etc.
337. cf. also Ibn Ezra.
338. op. cit. ibid.
339. op. cit. ibid.
340. cf. Prov. 21.17; 27.9 where למש is used in this connection.
341. Kamenetzky argues that Theod. lies behind the LXX B, (op. cit. p.230, n.2), but it should be noted that the grammar of Theodotion's rendering is incorrect -
καὶ οἶνος τοῖς ἐσθρανεῖναι τοὺς ζῶντας - we
 require οἶνον to make sense , cf. LXX B.
342. op. cit. p.238
343. op. cit. p.168
344. The Targum לחכא is ambiguous.
345. cf. BDB, KB ad loc.
346. Rashi is followed by Ibn Ezra, Mendelssohn, AV, Delitzsch, op. cit. pp.388f., C.H.H. wright, op. cit. p.301, McNeile, op. cit. p.110, Gordis, op. cit. p.318, Zimmerli, op. cit. p.238, Galling, op. cit. p.116.
347. The Peshitta rendering could also mean 'life', but in the light of למש in the next clause this is unlikely. T interprets 'for the thirsty' i.e. 'for the living who are

- thirsty' (T brackets וְיִצְחָק אָבִי - 'other books have the downtrodden')
348. "... et vinum laetificat viventes", op. cit. p.181.
349. We cannot be certain what Rashbam made of this passage, but it is probable that he understands חַיִּים to mean 'the living'.
350. op. cit. p.125
351. op. cit. p.72
352. op. cit. p.184
353. McNeile (op. cit. p.166) feels that this may be a corruption of וְיִצְחָק - meaning, presumably 'is occupied' - and so imagines a conflate here, but there is no evidence for this. The reason for וְיִצְחָק ('and leads astray') is not apparent; it may be merely an emphasizing device.
354. We might note here that in these two citations of scripture the root אָנַן is used in two different senses, viz. a) 'to answer' b) to testify; cf. the double translation of LXX.
355. op. cit. p.182
356. op. cit. p.244
357. op. cit. p.252
358. cf. NEB '... and money is behind it all'.

359. Zimmerli, *op. cit.* p.243
360. cf. Marcus Jastrow, *op. cit.* p.578 b
361. *op. cit.* p.194
362. cf. Dalman, *op. cit.* p.49 b
363. *op. cit.* p.455
364. *op. cit.* p.38
365. *op. cit.* p.166
366. *op. cit.* p.400
367. *op. cit.* p.194
368. *op. cit.* p.232
369. *ibid.*
370. This is also stated in Midrash Rabbah on 1.3, again referring to 11.9
371. *op. cit.* p.190
372. cf. Judg. 19.22; Prov. 15.13
373. *op. cit.* p.455
374. *ibid.*, cf. also Delitzsch, *op. cit.* p.400, Hengstenberg, *op. cit.* pp.241f., Graetz, *op. cit.* p.132.
375. Siegfried, *op. cit.* p.73
376. Wildeboer, *op. cit.* p.161
377. e.g. McNeile, *op. cit.* p.26, Barton, *op. cit.* p.185, Podechard, *op. cit.* p.452, M. Jastrow, Jr., *op. cit.* p.238, Zimmerli, *op. cit.* p.242, Scott, *op. cit.* p.254, Galling, *op. cit.* p.120.

378. op. cit. pp.208f.
379. op. cit. pp.184f.
380. ibid. p.185
381. op. cit. pp.325f.
382. ibid. pp.92f.
383. contra AV, C.D. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.455, C.H.P. Wright,
op. cit. p.302.
384. cf. Barton, op. cit. p.180, Scott, op. cit. p.253, JB,
RSV, NEB, Galling, op. cit. p.120, Barucq, op. cit.
p.181.
385. Marcus Gastrow, op. cit. p.532
386. op. cit. p.192
387. op. cit. p.455
388. e.g. Graetz, op. cit. p.133, Delitzsch, op. cit. p.401,
C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.302, McNeile, op. cit. p.111,
Zimmerli, op. cit. p.242, Hertzberg, op. cit. p.204,
Galling, op. cit. p.120.
389. op. cit. pp.242f.
390. op. cit. p.253.
391. similarly Rashbam
392. op. cit. p.192
393. op. cit. p.456
394. e.g. Graetz, op. cit. p.133, Barton, op. cit. p.180,
RSV, NEB, Zimmerli, op. cit. p. 242, Hertzberg, op. cit.

- p.204, Galling, op. cit. p.120.
395. so KB, cf. JB 'shield from'.
396. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.501 rightly argues that the connection between LXX and P here is due not to the P translator following LXX, but to a "later and unskilful hand" endeavouring to make the Syriac agree with the Greek.
397. cf. Gordis, op. cit. p.327
398. cf. Marcus Jastrow, op. cit. p.1703.
399. cf. Luther, op. cit. pp.192f.
400. op. cit. p.243
401. Ginsburg, op. cit. p.456
402. *ibid.*
403. e.g. Delitzsch, op. cit. p.401, C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.435, McNeile, op. cit. p.85, Barton, op. cit. p.195, Gordis, op. cit. p.327, Scott, op. cit. p.253, JB, Hertzberg, op. cit. p.204, Zimmerli, op. cit. p.242, Galling, op. cit. p.120
404. op. cit. p.73
405. op. cit. pp.120f.
406. e.g. Gordis, op. cit. p.327
407. *ibid.*
408. It is interesting that לִּנְ is rarely used in the Old

Testament in its primary sense, e.g. Is. 57.13;
 Ps. 62.10; Ps.144.4; and perhaps Prov. 21.6. cf. BDB
 and KB ad loc.

409. So McNeile, op. cit. p.96, Barton, op. cit. p.185,
 Galling, op. cit. p.120.
410. op. cit. pp.91, 330; cf. also pp.32f.
411. cf. Delitzsch, op. cit. p.402.
412. cf. C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.238, n.1, GK 124 k.
413. op. cit. pp.124ff.
414. cf. C.H.H. Wright, op. cit. p.239.
415. H.I. Ginsberg, SK, p.5.
416. op. cit. p.132.
417. op. cit. p.253
418. Gordis, op. cit. p.330, Hertzberg, op. cit. p.206,
 Zimmerli, op. cit. p.245.
419. op. cit. p.120
420. e.g. Hengstenberg, op. cit. pp.243f., Ginsburg, op. cit.
 p.457, Delitzsch, op. cit. p.402, C.H.H. Wright, op.
 cit. p.302, Gordis, op. cit. p.330, Hertzberg, op. cit.
 p.204, Barucq, op. cit. p.181.
421. op. cit. p.195
422. B. Tal. Berakhoth 3.5, cf. also Genesis Rabbah 58
423. BDB, p.82 b; cf. Jos. 14.10; Jer. 20.14.
424. op. cit. p.253.

- 425. op. cit. p.193.
- 426. W.E. Staples, "The Meaning of Hōpes in Ecclesiastes",
JNES 24, 1965, pp.110ff.
- 427. ibid. p.110
- 428. cf. BDB, ad loc.
- 429. cf. Staples, ibid. p.112.
- 430. op. cit. p.120.

Notes on Rashbam

- 1. Rashbam רשב"ם is the acrostic of רבי שמואל בן מאיר
Rabbi Samuel ben Meir.
- 2. These dates are taken from a note on Rashbam by Hugo Fuchs
in "The Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia" ed. Isaac Landman
New York, 1948, Vol. 9, p.77; C.D. Ginsburg gives 1085
and 1155 as the approximate dates (op. cit. p.42, n.2).
- 3. Schulim Ochser, art. "Samuel ben Meir", The Jewish
Encyclopaedia, New York, 1905, Vol. XI, p.22.
- 4. ibid. p.23.
- 5. Authoritative exposition of the Hebrew Scriptures, with
the purpose of the extraction of the rule of life. About
500 A.D. this type came to an end with the closing of the
Talmud.

6. This method allowed more scope for the imagination, treating the Hebrew text in a very free manner, rather as a peg upon which to hang edifying stories and teaching. Since this kind was not authoritative it received no check at the close of the Talmud and continued to be employed for several centuries.
7. One of his earliest commentaries seems to be on 'Song of Songs' and is very haggadic in character.
8. cf. Ochser, op. cit. pp.22f., S.W. Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, New York, 1958, Vol. VI, pp.294f., B. Smalley, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, Oxford, 1952, p.151.
9. cf. Fuchs, op. cit. p.77f.
10. Ochser, op. cit. p.23.
11. i.e. the script used for Rashi's commentaries in the Rabbinic Bibles.
12. ה is an abbreviation for השם 'The Name', and is used for יהוה in the three Psalm quotations in 1.2. השם is used when referring to the name יהוה in 1.2. ה is an abbreviation for אדני , and is used at 7.7 in a quotation from Prov. 2.6.
13. i.e. הקדוש ברוך הוא 'The Holy One, blessed be He' - used frequently by Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Kimchi.
14. see commentary at 8.2 and 9.7.

15. i.e. הקדוש 'The Holy One'.
16. i.e. 'heaven'. שמים occurs five times: 7.16;
8.10-11; 12.13; השמים occurs three times: 2.24;
3.13; 5.18.
17. אלקים where ק is substituted for ה in yet
another rabbinic substitute (כבד) for אלהים
(אלדים is a variation of this). Even when Rashbam
is quoting the Hebrew text of Koholeth he is inclined to
alter the word for God. Thus in 8.2 and 12.13 this
substitute is found. Only in 5.19 is the Hebrew text
quoted faithfully, i.e. אלהים .

Other references in the commentary where the
substitute is used are: 4.17; 7.4; 5.6; 7.13; 12.13.

18. ואותן אשר סידורו אמר מכאן
19. The fact that Rashbam was not highly thought of by his
immediate contemporaries is an indication of this. Some
of his work was lost because it lacked the midrashic
colour, popular in his day; even his commentary on the
Pentateuch has not been preserved in its entirety and yet
the works of lesser commentators, such as Ibn Ezra and
David Kimchi, were acclaimed and preserved by their
immediate academic posterity.
20. v.7
21. v.6

22. There are over a hundred of these.
23. It will be seen, however, that in the translation all scripture quotations have been identified and marked.
24. Ochser, op. cit. pp.22f.
25. There are only six Talmudic quotations in the commentary - all from the Babylonian Talmud.
26. Shabbath 120a; Baba Mezia 64; Aboth 1.17 (bis);
Baba Bathra 144b; Pesahim 28a.
27. see note 62 below.
28. B. Tal. Shab. 120a.
29. Rashbam follows the traditional view that Koheleth is Solomon.
30. Here he follows Rashi's understanding of the name Koheleth, which differs from the earlier view found in Midrash Rabbah, viz. that Solomon is thus called because his words were uttered in public.
31. cf. Rashi.
32. An example of how Rashbam is concerned to link the various statements of the book together.

33. The text reads בים = "through (or in) the sea", but this does not make sense. It is probably a misprint for ביום = "during the day".
34. The legend which arose from the exegesis of this verse is ignored by Rashbam. cf. Midrash Rabbah, Yalkut Shmoni Targum and Rashi ad loc.
35. The term בלע"ז means literally, 'in a foreign language', but here, as in Rashi, it must mean 'in French'. The word 'talent' has the meaning 'inclination, spirit'. Rashi uses the same word to gloss רוח at 1.6
36. This quotation does not agree with MT which has לדעת
37. There is no definite indication that this is a gloss on the opening words of 2.1 but this must be its purpose. Jellinek's footnote reads: "Mentioned above; it refers to אמרתי whose interpretation in French is like דברתי in verse 16 above".
38. C.D. Ginsburg (op. cit. p.276) claims that Rashbam follows Rashi here (מסך יין לשחור) understanding the word to refer to the pouring out of wine; but Rashbam ensures that he will not be misunderstood, by defining the ambiguous בסיכות with the unambiguous קצינות .
39. Here he follows Rashi מרכבות ברי עגלת צב ובלשון גמרא יש שדה תיבא ומגדל
40. In the footnote to the text Jellinek observes that the

- manuscript reads חנקר ; he has accordingly altered it to read חנקר . In the medieval script ח and נ are easily confused, as are ק and ד .
41. This citing from the Hebrew text of Koheleth is at variance with MT which is אחרי
42. ולמחר should perhaps read ולמהר cf. Rashi (ומי ימהר) i.e. taking חוש to mean 'to hasten'.
43. The words יכון רשע וצדיק may be a quotation but it does not seem to be either Biblical or Talmudic.
44. The text is misprinted: ובכלה מעשים should read ובכל המעשים
45. It is interesting to note that Rashbam, having used השמים for אלהים here continues the 'substitution' by using the plural verb שבתנו .
46. Jellinek's footnote indicates that the manuscript has כר although what is required is סר .
47. יבואנו in the text must be a misprint, since Rashbam must be quoting the Hebrew text which reads בואנו
48. "He who seizes his friend's slave". The verb חקף can mean 'seize', 'prevail over', 'be too strong for'.
49. This quotation from Jer. 4,22 is not in accord with MT; the latter reads .. אורי עמי not אריל עמי
50. The plural verb היו differs from MT = היה ; cf. LXX, P and Vulgate, all of which may have had a text.

reading ה"י .

51. Jellinek's footnote reads "Berakoth (i.e. of B. Talmud) page 7, side 1" . It is true a reference is made there to Exod. 33.13 but the discussion on it is hardly apropos of Rashbam's explanation. There is no reference to the Exodus passage in Yalkut Shemoni, Midrash Rabbah or in the Pesikta de Rab Kahana; it is therefore likely that Rashbam refers to some other Midrashic collection.
52. These words are also to be found in B. Tal. Kethuboth 103a and Tosephta 12; in each case the saying is attributed to רב חונא .
53. Jellinek transcribes "infirmos", but "enfirme" is a more likely form as well as being a better transcription of the Hebrew letters.
54. N.B. MT = יגם זה
55. קרא is difficult. In the light of the context it is better to emend the text to קרא that is, to consider it a misprint. cf. חכמה קרא מתנה and הכסיל קרא עושק in the same passage. In the medieval script ק and א might easily be confused.
56. N.B. וותרן is in brackets and in square script; it also has the conjunction ו attached. It is not clear why this should be so. The word means 'yielding' and occurs in B. Tal. Baba kama, 50 and ~~Yoma Kama, 30~~, where

- the word is linked with סבלן = 'patient, long-suffering'.
57. In the light of the occurrences of the term גופל in this passage it may be that גוכל is a misprint and should be emended, but good sense can be obtained from the text as it stands.
58. The term רואי השמש in Modern Hebrew comes to mean 'those who are alive'.
59. The term והתחולל לו is not listed by Alcalay or Jastrow but Jehudah Gur has it with the meaning 'to change oneself' which suits the context here. (J. Gur, op. cit. p.283).
60. Rashbam follows Rashi here in taking the suffix in אחרייו to refer to God.
61. The quotation from the Hebrew is not exactly the same as MT - כל זה but cf. Rashbam on 8.10-11 where he quotes Koh. 7.23 as per MT.
62. The terms מעשה מרכבה and ספר יצירה are written in square characters - something normally reserved in this commentary for the Hebrew text of Koheleth. (but cf. above note 56). They occur together (along with the Mishnah) in B. Tal. Hagigah 11b where they appear to be titles of books held in high regard. The Book of Creation or Formation (Sepher Yetzirah, W.W. Westcott, London,

1893, p.5) and the Work of the Chariot are both the products of Jewish Mysticism. (S.W. Baron, op. cit. Vol. VIII, p.11.) taking the relevant passages in Genesis and Ezekiel as the respective bases for their expositions.

מעשה מרכבה is mentioned in B. Tal. Hagigah 13c, 14b, Succah 28a and in Tosephta, Hagigah 2.1; further allusions to it are made in Berakoth, 21b and Megillah, 24b and 25b. The term came to be used for something very 'complex and involved', but in this context it must refer to the mystical writings of that name. ספר יצירה mentioned in B. Tal. Hagigah 11b and Sanhedrin 65b is an ancient Kabbalistic treatise of the same genre as the Zohar (Westcott, op. cit. p.7).

63. There has been a misprint here; the text should read

מעשה של חכמה

64. Rashbam takes the subject of the feminine אמרה to be the נפש of Koheleth. This suggestion may have arisen from the phrase in v.28 בקשה נפשי

65. ולמצוא should probably read ולמצור

66. This is not an exact quotation: MT = ותכל דור המלך לצאת

67. Rashbam seems to take ועת ומשפט as a hendiadys.

68. The term לשון פעול is difficult. פעול can mean 'passive', but to say that בחרן should be vocalised בחרן is unlikely. Apart from the fact that MT

- reads נחן Rashbam seems to comment as though it were 'active'. פעול must therefore be vocalised פעול ; Rashbam must be indicating that he understands נחן as the infinitive absolute.
69. The quotation from Ezekiel is incomplete and that which is omitted is the relevant part, viz. אשר בא יומך בעת עון קץ '... whose day is come, the day of (your) final punishment'.
70. We have been unable to elucidate the gloss here. Jellinek, in a footnote, is uncertain of the French. There is no doubt, however, as to the meaning of the phrase ניין - the examples cited by Rashbam are sufficient to define it.
71. As it stands the text does not make sense - ואחד = 'and one', and must be a corruption of ואחר 'and afterwards' which is the required sense. cf. MT ואחרי אל המתי
72. The imperative עשה , present in MT, has been omitted and must be supplied.
73. The term לשון is in brackets; it may have been supplied by Jellinek but there is no indication of this.
74. The form ותמי has been translated as if it were ותמיה
75. The order of these sayings in the Talmud is reversed:

Abaye is credited with the one about the stock-maker, the other is attributed to Raba.

76. The term **נעצר** 'is detained' is difficult. Perhaps the text should read **נעצב**, 'is hurt, pained', since the cognate noun **נעצב** is used along with the verb **נעצב** and this root **נעצב**, also in Niphal, occurs in MT, viz. **נעצב**.
77. Rashbam seems to be taking the root **סכנ** with the meaning 'to heat' which is strange. The context of the quoted passage suggests that the king needed the warmth of a woman, and the problem is solved when a woman becomes **סכנת** to him. It is due to this passage that Rashbam makes his deductions.
78. Jellinek in a footnote indicates that it is necessary to read (**צריך לקרוא**) **ונתקלקל והורע**, 'spoiled and impaired'. This has been followed in the translation.
79. The implication here is that **ברעל** takes its precise meaning from the context.
80. The term **נבי** is obscure. Jellinek footnotes "in other words because **נבי** is feminine, **חגיגה** is written with a **ת** indicating feminine gender." If it is assumed that **נבי** represents some form of the root **נבך** 'to vocalise' (e.g. the Niphal **נבך** = vocalised) it is a strange use of the root since **חגיגה** =

the letter ן is not a vowel. The dotted line requires explanation but it would be necessary to examine the manuscript in order to offer one. Jellinek's footnote has probably captured the general sense without explaining the structure. נני might be a corruption of כתיב

81. The comment on this verse is a good example of how Rashbam steers clear of midrashic type exegesis, cf. Midrash Rabbah, Yalkut Shemoni and Targum ad loc.
82. תתשרב is probably a misprint of תחשרב
83. Jellinek suggests that the text is corrupt and offers an emendation, viz. ירוגטייל which he transcribes *giuventu*.
84. The sense of this passage is clear. The form שתהא is strange, however. It may be a corruption of שתהיל 'which are (the idle teeth)'; or of שהא 'that is ...' which is how it has been taken in the translation.
85. מתהנל : The dictionaries do not list a Hithpael of הנל . It is probably a misprint of מתנהל , i.e. the Hithpael of נהל which means 'to be excited', 'to be confounded', a meaning which suits the context.
86. Jellinek's footnote reads: "like the old language in the Gemara, Shabbat p.155 Rashi and Kimchi have considered the

root שקר ".

The citation should read
Shabbath 152a.

= שבת דף קכ"ב ע"א

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